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DIGITAL ENGLISH DAILY, BENGALURU

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BJP, JD(U) get lion share of 101 seats each

Chirag Paswan's LJP (RV) bags 29 seats; Manjhi's HAM gets 6

NEW DELHI, 12 OCT

BJP and JD(U) will each contest on 101 seats in the Bihar Assembly elections, while Union Minister Chirag Paswan-led Lok Janshakti Party will field its candidates on 29 seats, Union minister and BJP's Bihar polls in-charge Dharmendra Pradhan announced on Sunday.

In a post on X as the meeting of the BJP's Central Election Committee, which includes Prime Minister Narendra Modi and other senior leaders, started, Pradhan said Union minister Jitan Ram Manjhi-led Hindustani Awam Morcha (Secular) and Upendra Kushwaha-led Rashtriya Lok Morcha will field their candidates on six seats each.

This is the first Assembly poll since Chief Minister Nitish Kumar led the NDA to end the 15-year reign of the RJD-led government in 2005 that his Janata Dal (United) will not be contesting more seats than BJP in alliance, a clear signal of the acknowledgement within the ruling bloc of the regional party's decline and BJP's growing heft.

BJP had contested one more seat in the state than the JD(U) in the 2024 Lok Sabha polls, also a first.

Paswan, who seems to have drawn the best bargain, and Kushwaha echoed Pradhan's message.

Manjhi, whose quota of seats is far short of his public posturing, had in a post a few hours before Pradhan's announcement asserted his loyalty to Prime Minister Narendra Modi till "my last breath".

Bihar will again have Modi-Nitish government, Manjhi added.

The announcement followed days of negotiations involving senior BJP leadership and their allies except the JD(U), which had reached an understanding with the principal NDA party earlier.

Allies like Paswan, Manjhi and Kushwaha drove a hard bargain with BJP and blew hot and cold in talks, even as the negotiation continued.

Paswan appears to have prevailed on BJP, which conceded more seats than it was earlier willing to.

The 243-member Bihar Assembly will go to the polls in two phases on 6 and 11 November .

In 2020, Chief Minister Nitish Kumar-led JD(U) had contested on 115 seats and BJP on 110 seats, while Paswan's party had fought independently due to his differences with Kumar.

The NDA had won 125 seats while Mahagathbandhan secured 110 seats in the closely contested election. *—PTI*

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Prime Minister Narendra Modi, BJP National President JP Nadda, and other senior party leaders attend the Central Election Committee (CEC) meeting at the party headquarters in New Delhi on Sunday ***PHOTO: PTI***

THE NDA FORMULA

TOTAL SEATS: 243

PARTY	SEATS
JD(U)	101
BJP	101
LJP (Ram Vilas)	29
HAM (Secular)	6
RLM	6

BJP names RS candidates in J&K as Cong opts out

JAMMU/SRINAGAR, 12 OCT

- NC has already named three candidates, expected to win without Congress support. The fourth seat will require full backing from non-BJP MLAs.

BJP on Sunday announced three candidates for the upcoming Rajya Sabha elections in Jammu and Kashmir, scheduled for 24 October. State BJP president Sat Pal Sharma, Ghulam Mohammed Mir, and Rakesh Mahajan have been nominated. The Election Commission has issued three notifications for the four-seat election.

Based on current Assembly numbers, the BJP holds strength for one seat, while the National Conference (NC)-Congress alliance is favoured to win three. However, BJP's decision to contest all seats is expected to heighten the contest, as it seeks cross-party MLA support.

Meanwhile, the Jammu and Kashmir Pradesh Congress Committee announced it will not contest the elections. PCC president Tariq Hamid Karra said the decision followed NC's refusal to offer Congress a 'safe' seat. Congress had requested one of two seats being voted under separate notifications but was instead offered a less secure seat under a joint notification.

NC has already named three candidates, expected to win without Congress support. The fourth seat will require full backing from non-BJP MLAs, including those from PDP, AAP, and smaller parties.

Karra said discussions on RS polls and by-elections in Budgam and Nagrota also took place. *—PTI*

Egypt's Sisi invites Modi to Gaza peace meet

NEW DELHI, 12 OCT

Prime Minister (PM) Narendra Modi has received an official invitation from Egyptian President Abdel Fattah El-Sisi to attend the Gaza Peace Summit in Sharm El Sheikh, the Indian Express reported. While Modi will not attend in person, Minister of State Kirti Vardhan Singh will represent India. The summit, co-chaired by Trump and El-Sisi, will host leaders from over 20 countries, including UN Secretary-General Antonio Guterres, UK PM Keir Starmer, and French President Emmanuel Macron. *—Agencies*

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Priyank urges CM to ban RSS in govt institutions

BENGALURU, 12 OCT

Minister Priyank Kharge has urged Chief Minister Siddaramaiah to impose a ban on all Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh (RSS) activities in government institutions and public spaces, citing concerns over national unity and constitutional values. In a letter dated 4 October, Priyank, son of Congress president Mallikarjun Kharge, alleged that RSS 'shakhas' were being held in government and aided schools, as well as on public grounds, where "slogans are shouted and negative ideas instilled in children and youth." The Chief Minister's Office shared the letter with the media on Sunday, noting that Siddaramaiah has asked officials to take appropriate action. *—PTI*

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After backlash, Afghan FM invites women to press meet

NEW DELHI/AGRA, 12 OCT

Afghanistan's Foreign Minister Amir Khan Muttaqi's scheduled visit to the Taj Mahal in Agra on Sunday was abruptly cancelled without explanation. Agra officials and the district protocol department confirmed the change but offered no reasons. The visit was expected to last an hour and a half.

The cancellation came amid rising tensions between Afghanistan and Pakistan. In New Delhi, Muttaqi held a fresh press briefing, this time inviting women journalists, following criticism over their exclusion at previous events.

Meanwhile, Islamabad summoned the Afghan ambassador over a joint India-Afghanistan statement condemning terrorism. The statement, issued in Delhi on Friday, condemned the April terror attack in Pahalgam and affirmed both countries' commitment to regional peace.

Afghanistan Foreign Minister Muttaqi addresses a press conference in New Delhi on Sunday ***PHOTO: PTI***

Hours later, Afghanistan claimed to have killed 58 Pakistani soldiers in a retaliatory strike, following Pakistani air strikes near Kabul on Thursday. Muttaqi warned that while Afghanistan prefers peaceful dialogue, it has "other means" if provoked.

"Our policy is zero tension," he said. "But if that's not respected, Afghanistan is capable of defending its territory and sovereignty." He blamed "specific elements" in Pakistan for escalating tensions and reiterated that Afghan people and politicians want peaceful ties.

"We defeated the Soviets, we resisted the US and NATO for 20 years," he added. Muttaqi confirmed that friendly nations, including Qatar and Saudi Arabia, have urged calm. "We want peace, not only in Afghanistan, but across the region," he said. *—PTI*

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Op Blue Star a mistake, Indira paid for it with her life: Chidambaram

SHIMLA, 12 OCT

Congress leader P Chidambaram on Saturday said "Operation Blue Star was not the right way to capture militants holed up in Amritsar's Golden Temple in 1984, adding that then-Prime Minister Indira Gandhi paid with her life for the operation."

"There was a way to retrieve and capture all militants, but Operation Blue Star was the wrong way. I agree Mrs Gandhi paid with her life for the mistake, but it was the cumulative decision of the Army, Intelligence, Police and civil defence. You cannot completely blame just Mrs Gandhi," Chidambaram said during a conversation with journalist and author Harinder Baweja on her memoir 'They Will Shoot You Madam: My Life Through Conflict' at the Khushwant Singh Literary Festival in Kasauli.

Operation Blue Star, held between 1–10 June, 1984, aimed to remove Damdami Taksal leader Jarnail Singh Bhindranwale and his followers. Later that year, Indira Gandhi was assassinated. Chidambaram pointed out that Operation Black Thunder in 1986 and 1988 demonstrated a different, less aggressive approach to flushing out militants from the temple complex.

- "There was a way to retrieve and capture all militants, but Operation Blue Star was the wrong way. I agree Mrs Gandhi paid with her life for the mistake..." Chidambaram said.

CONGRESS LEADERSHIP FUMES

The Congress leadership reportedly expressed strong disapproval over Chidambaram's remarks. Party sources said senior leaders must exercise caution in public statements that could embarrass the party. "The top leadership and the entire party are very upset. The rank and file are agitated. Repeated statements like this create problems for the party," they said.

Chidambaram also discussed Kashmir, noting there is an alternative narrative to the conflict than what is commonly portrayed on television, and stressed the long-term impact of conflicts on local populations. *—PTI*

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Hollwood icon Diane Keaton dies at 79

LOS ANGELES, 12 OCT

Diane Keaton, the Oscar-winning actress known for iconic roles in 'Annie Hall', 'The Godfather' trilogy, and 'Father of the Bride', has died at 79, reports said. Keaton's unique style and depth made her a standout star of her generation, from the quirky Annie Hall to the poignant Kay Adams of the Corleone family. Her enduring career included collaborations with Woody Allen and filmmaker Nancy Meyers. In 2017, Keaton revealed she struggled with bulimia during her early career, describing it as a mental illness driven by pressure to lose weight. *—PTI*

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RAHUL IN PERU

'Upper classes have a chokehold on education'

NEW DELHI, 12 OCT

Congress leader and Leader of the Opposition Rahul Gandhi has sharply criticised the Indian education system during his tour of Latin America, alleging it suffers from a chokehold by upper castes. Speaking to students at the Pontifical Catholic University of Peru and the University of Chile, Gandhi said the system excludes the history and traditions of lower castes, middle castes, and Adivasis, and claimed that over the past decade, India's scientific temper has been severely damaged.

Gandhi stressed that education should not be a privilege reserved for the wealthy but must be accessible to all, describing it as the very foundation of freedom. He urged for an education system that encourages curiosity, critical thinking, and openness, free from political or social constraints. "India needs an education system that fosters scientific temper and reflects the rich diversity of our nation," he said.

During his week-long visit to Colombia, Brazil, Peru, and Chile, Gandhi also highlighted the need for India to develop an alternative manufacturing system within a democratic framework. He suggested that partnerships with countries like Peru and the US could pave the way forward in today's multipolar world.

His remarks, which raise internal issues on foreign soil, have attracted significant attention and criticism back home. Capitalising on this, BJP have taken sharp digs at Gandhi, questioning the "silence and secrecy" surrounding his trip. *—PTI*

BJP leaders Locket Chatterjee and Jyotirmay Singh Mahato along with party workers protest against the state government over the gangrape of an MBBS student in Durgapur, West Bengal on Sunday ***PHOTO: PTI***

How was she out at 12.30 am?: Didi on medico's rape in WB

DURGAPUR, 12 OCT

Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee has faced sharp criticism after her remarks on the gang rape of a 23-year-old MBBS student from Odisha studying in a private medical college in Durgapur.

In her first comments following the incident, Banerjee questioned "how the student came out at 12.30 at night" and said private colleges should ensure student safety and control the culture at night. She called the incident 'shocking' and assured that the guilty would be punished, citing similar cases in Odisha, Manipur, Uttar Pradesh, and Bihar.

BJP accused her of victim shaming. Spokespersons Gaurav Bhatia and Shehzad Poonawalla said Banerjee was blaming the survivor instead of ensuring justice and demanded accountability.

Victim's condition and family concerns

The student's father expressed fear for her safety in West Bengal. "She is unable to walk and is on bed rest," he told ANI. He said she was taken out by a classmate to eat when other men arrived and raped her between 8 and 9 pm. "The hostel was far, security was insufficient, and no proper action was taken," he said. The family requested that she be allowed to return to Odisha for safety and continuation of her studies. Three men, Apu Bauri, 21, Firdos Sekh, 23, and Sekh Reajuddin, 31, have been arrested, and one person is detained. Odisha CM Mohan Charan Manjhi called the incident 'highly condemnable.' *—Agencies*

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Dalit student gangraped in Lucknow

Lucknow, 12 Oct

A 16-year-old Dalit student was allegedly gangraped by five unidentified men in Lucknow on Saturday, police said. According to Assistant Commissioner of Police Vikash Kumar Pandey, the girl had left home around noon to visit a relative. She was traveling on a motorcycle with an acquaintance when they stopped to talk in a mango orchard near a petrol pump.

"Five unknown men approached them. They beat up her acquaintance, who fled the scene. The men then raped the girl," Pandey said.

The assailants warned the girl against revealing the incident before leaving. The survivor later informed a male relative, who alerted the police.

Ban RSS in govt bodies, public spaces: Priyank

In a letter to CM, he alleged that RSS ideology runs counter to India's constitutional principles of unity

- Priyank Kharge accused the organisation of holding public events without police permission and conducting "aggressive displays while wielding sticks", which he said could have a harmful psychological effect on children. Calling for decisive government action, he demanded a ban on all RSS activities.

BENGALURU, 12 OCT

Minister Priyank Kharge has urged Chief Minister Siddaramaiah to impose a ban on all Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh (RSS) activities in government institutions and public spaces, citing concerns over national unity and constitutional values.

In a letter dated 4 October, Priyank, son of Congress president Mallikarjun Kharge, alleged that RSS 'shakhas' were being held in government and aided schools, as well as on public grounds, where "slogans are shouted and negative ideas instilled in children and youth." The Chief Minister's Office shared the letter with the media on Sunday, noting that Siddaramaiah has asked officials to take appropriate action.

Kharge said RSS ideology runs counter to India's constitutional principles of unity and secularism. He accused the organisation of holding public events without police permission and conducting "aggressive displays while wielding sticks", which he said could have a harmful psychological effect on children.

Calling for decisive government action, he demanded a ban on all RSS activities — including shakhas, sanghiks, and baithaks — in government schools, parks, public playgrounds, temples under the Muzrai Department, archaeological sites, and all government-owned spaces.

Speaking to reporters, Kharge clarified he has no objection to RSS events held on private premises, but insisted that public spaces must remain ideologically neutral. He also criticised the RSS for "sowing poisonous seeds of communalism" and claimed the last decade under their influence has seen national decline. He cited recent remarks by RSS Chief Mohan Bhagwat acknowledging growing economic inequality.

Chief Minister Siddaramaiah's son and MLC Yathindra Siddaramaiah backed the call, saying RSS events have often taken place without required permissions and promote a "poisonous ideology."

The BJP slammed the move. State president BY Vijayendra called Kharge's letter "foolish" and "a gimmick," claiming past Congress attempts to ban RSS had failed.

In a post on X, Vijayendra accused the Congress of tolerating anti-national elements while targeting the RSS, whose aim, he said, is "Sarvangeena Unnati" (holistic development) of the nation. Former BJP minister S Suresh Kumar warned Congress was repeating historical mistakes by attempting to target the RSS again. *—PTI*

Swayamsevaks take part in a march during the RSS' centenary celebrations held across Bengaluru on Sunday
PHOTO: MOHAMMED ASAD

Munirathna, DKS face off at 'Walk with B'luru'

BENGALURU, 12 OCT

State Deputy Chief Minister DK Shivakumar's public outreach programme at JP Park on Sunday faced disruption by BJP MLA Munirathna and his supporters.

Shivakumar, who holds the Bengaluru development portfolio, has been conducting the 'Bengaluru Nadige' (Bengaluru March) programme for three days, meeting residents, welfare associations, and various community members. A stage was set up at the park for him to address the gathering, and he sat alongside officials.

Munirathna, wearing an RSS uniform and black cap, was invited to the stage. He seized the microphone from the anchor and alleged, "The banner here does not have the photos of the MP or MLA of this area. This is a Congress event and not a government event."

His supporters raised slogans, prompting police intervention, after which Munirathna staged a sit-in at a flag post, calling it an insult to the sitting MLA.

Shivakumar urged calm, saying, "The MLA didn't have the patience. I don't know whether he came here to insult this public meeting. The commotion will not bother me. Me and you are a bit perturbed because of electing such people. I know this situation."

DyCM DK Shivakumar interacts with morning walkers during the 'Walk with Bengaluru Citizens' event at JP Park, Mathikere, in Bengaluru on Sunday
PHOTO: SALAR

Shivakumar and Munirathna have been at odds since 2023. Munirathna, a former Congress member, later joined the BJP, helped topple the Congress-JD(S) coalition, and

became a minister. He won the 2023 Assembly election and defeated Shivakumar's brother in 2024.

Munirathna was recently booked in cheating and rape cases, calling them 'politics of vendetta.' *—PTI*

Wet mixing to fill potholes: DCM

Bengaluru, 12 Oct

Dy CM DK Shivakumar said wet mixing would be used to fill potholes during the rainy season. "Wet mixing has been used for road works. It is usually used as an emergency process for asphalting during rains," he told media at his Sadashivanagar residence. On asphalting near Marathahalli, he said, "Heavy rains were reported across the city last night. No damage has been reported, though some water logging occurred." Asked about potholes resurfacing after repair, he said, "It is natural but will resolve it." *—Salar News*

Surya seeks geological report for tunnel work

BENGALURU, 12 OCT

Bengaluru South MP Tejasvi Surya on Sunday inspected the proposed Tunnel Road ramp site at Lalbagh Botanical Garden, opposing any acquisition of the heritage site.

He directed the Geological Survey of India (GSI) to study the project's impact on the 300-million-year-old Lalbagh Rock, a National Geological Monument. Surya criticised B-SMILE, the government's SPV, for skipping an Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) and public consultation.

"The Karnataka Government is looking to take away Bengaluru's most precious lung space to make a tunnel ramp.

The project threatens Lalbagh Rock and includes a commercial complex with malls and eateries. Lalbagh belongs to the city, and people do not want any portion conceded for this vanity project," he said.

He warned that tunnelling without proper assessment could cause fractures, hydrological disruptions, and ecosystem damage, citing the Uttarakhand tunnel disaster. Surya noted that Metro Phase 3A altered its route to protect Lalbagh Rock. He called for a public geological study before any irreversible work, demanding transparency and adherence to national EIA rules. *—Salar News*

Bengaluru South MP Tejasvi Surya on Sunday inspected the proposed Tunnel Road ramp site at Lalbagh Botanical Garden
PHOTO: SALAR

20 years of RTI: Congress urges for its protection

BENGALURU, 12 OCT

Marking the 20th anniversary of the Right to Information (RTI) Act, the Congress on Sunday reaffirmed its commitment to protect and strengthen the law, calling it one of the 'greatest democratic reforms' of modern India and warning that its erosion means erosion of democracy itself.

Deputy Chief Minister DK Shivakumar said the historic RTI Act was enacted on 12 October, 2005, during the UPA government led by Manmohan Singh.

"The Act empowered citizens to access information, ensured transparency, and acted as a lifeline for the most marginalised," he said. However, since 2014, Shivakumar said, "RTI has been consistently eroded."

He criticised the 2019 amendments for weakening independence and increasing executive control over Information Commissioners. "RTI enables citizens to hold power accountable, and its erosion is an erosion of democracy itself," he said.

He also flagged the 2023 Digital Personal Data Protection Act, which broadened the scope of 'personal information,' undermining public audit by treating public data as private. *—PTI*

LIGHTING UP HOMES

A woman carefully packs clay diyas ahead of the Deepavali festival on 20 October at Pottery Town in Bengaluru on Sunday
PHOTO: MOHAMMED ASAD

Woman burnt over son's caste marriage

BAGEPALLI, 12 OCT

A 48-year-old woman, Bayamma, sustained severe burn injuries after she was allegedly set on fire by relatives of a girl who had eloped and married Bayamma's son. The incident occurred on Monday in Sankatapalli village under Pathapalya police limits, Bagepalli taluk, but came to light only yesterday when Bayamma's family demanded police action.

Bayamma's son, Ambarish, who runs a hotel in Pathapalya, was in a relationship with Prathibha, 18, from nearby Kogilollapalli village. Despite opposition from both families, who belong to the same caste, the couple eloped on October 6 and were married at a temple in Kadadanamari village, Chintamani taluk.

Following the marriage, Prathibha's relatives reportedly blamed Bayamma for supporting the relationship. In a fit of rage, some of them allegedly poured petrol on Bayamma and set her on fire before fleeing the scene. She was rushed to Victoria Hospital in Bengaluru and is currently undergoing treatment.

Bayamma's family filed a complaint with the Pathapalya police, alleging a deliberate attack. However, police have maintained that it may have been an accident. PSI Syed Altaf said Prathibha's relatives had gone to Ambarish's house to burn her clothes and books, stating they never wanted to see her face again. Bayamma allegedly sustained burns while intervening.

The accused are currently absconding. *—Salar News*

KHADER, HORATTI IN BARBADOS

Assembly Speaker UT Khader along with Legislative Council Chairman Basavaraj Horatti visit the Barbados Parliament during the 68th Commonwealth Parliamentary Conference, where they observed the Speaker's chair donated by India — a symbol of Indo-Barbados parliamentary ties
PHOTO: SALAR

NO POLITICAL STRINGS

Not pushing any ideology: Rishab on 'Kantara: 1'

MUMBAI, 12 OCT

Actor-director Rishab Shetty has defended his latest film, 'Kantara: Chapter 1', stressing that it explores folklore and spirituality without promoting any political ideology or agenda.

The Kannada film, a prequel to the 2022 blockbuster Kantara, delves into faith, tribal culture, and nature worship rooted in coastal Karnataka. Since its release, the film has earned Rs 600 crore globally, becoming a cultural phenomenon and drawing widespread acclaim for its rooted storytelling and visual grandeur.

Shetty, who co-wrote the film along with Anirudh Mahesh and Shanil Guru, emphasised that his primary aim is to be an unbiased storyteller, presenting elements of Bharatiyata and indigenous belief systems while allowing audiences to interpret the narrative in their own way. "Irrespective of all parties and people, there is no ideology or agenda in this," he told PTI.

The Kannada film delves into faith, tribal culture, and nature worship rooted in coastal Karnataka
PHOTO: PTI

He compared the cinematic experience to personal worship: "You go to temple, you pray... you feel it, you do not talk about it to someone else. We wanted to give the audience that kind of experience through the story, and how they receive it is entirely up to them."

Creating the prequel was particularly challenging due to the complex storyline, the dynamics between characters, and the scarcity of historical references for the pre-colonial era. Shetty credited his team for extensive work on cinematography, production design, and costumes, ensuring both visual appeal and historical authenticity. Looking ahead, Shetty confirmed plans to expand the Kantara universe further. His next venture will be Jai Hanuman. *—PTI*

Air wing gets 1st woman flight engineer

NEW DELHI, 12 OCT

The Border Security Force (BSF) air wing has achieved a historic milestone by appointing its first woman flight engineer, Inspector Bhawna Chaudhary.

Inspector Chaudhary, alongside four male subordinate officers, was recently awarded her flying badge by BSF Director General Daljit Singh Chawdhary, after completing the force's inaugural in-house training programme.

The two-month training, comprising 130 hours of instruction, was launched to address a critical shortage of flight engineers for the BSF's Mi-17 helicopter fleet.

The personnel gained hands-on experience during operational sorties, including missions conducted during recent floods in Punjab and other states.

Established in 1969, the BSF air wing operates the Ministry of Home Affairs' aviation unit,

Bhawna Chaudhary was awarded her flying badge by BSF's Daljit Singh Chawdhary, after completing the in-house training
PHOTO: BSF INDIA

serving all paramilitary and special forces, including the NSG and NDRF. The fleet includes Mi-17 helicopters, ALH Dhruv, Cheetah, and a fixed-wing Embraer jet for VIP duties.

Officials said the second batch of flight engineers could not secure slots with the Indian Air Force, prompting the in-house programme.

Inspector Chaudhary's achievement marks a vital step for gender representation in the force, demonstrating the BSF's commitment to enhancing operational capacity while embracing inclusivity. *—PTI*

PHOTO: ANI

Modi to meet Bihar BJP workers on 15 October

NEW DELHI, 12 OCT

Prime Minister Narendra Modi will kickstart his Bihar Assembly election campaign on Wednesday, 15 October, with an interactive session under the 'Mera Booth, Sabse Majboot' (My Booth, the Strongest) initiative. Modi said engaging with committed party workers inspires new ideas and urged them to share suggestions. The 243-seat Bihar Assembly will go to polls in two phases on 6 and 11 November, with results declared on 14 November. The BJP-led NDA, including JD(U), LJP (Ram Vilas), Hindustani Awam Morcha (Secular) and Rashtriya Lok Morcha will contest against the RJD-led Mahagathbandhan, which includes Congress, Left parties and smaller allies. The Jan Suraaj party will contest 51 seats. *—PTI*

Man held for bomb threat to TN CM's home

CHHENNAI, 12 OCT

A 36-year-old man, Iyappan, was arrested for making a hoax bomb threat to Tamil Nadu Chief Minister MK Stalin's residence. He called the Police Control Room on Saturday, claiming a bomb had been planted. The bomb disposal squad, dog squad, and Teynampet police responded, and the premises were declared safe.Investigations revealed Iyappan, from Tiruporur in Chengalpattu district, had made similar threats in 2020 to Chennai's Koyambedu bus terminus, Egmore railway station, and the airport. He was also arrested in 2021 for a similar threat to the CM's residence.As he is differently-abled, a father of two, and a habitual drinker, he was advised against repeating such crimes and released on bail. *—PTI*

UP cleric's wife, daughters killed; 2 minors held

BAGHPAT, 12 OCT

Two minor students have been detained for the murder of a cleric's wife and two young daughters in Doghat, Uttar Pradesh. The victims, Israna, 30, and her daughters Sofia, 5, and Sumaiya, 2, were found at their home on the mosque premises in Gangnauli village. The boys confessed, claiming the attack was in response to frequent scolding and beatings from the cleric. While the cleric was away, the minors allegedly used a hammer and knife to kill the woman and her children. The weapons have been recovered. A case has been registered against the minors and the police are probing the incident. The bodies have been sent for autopsy. *—PTI*

PHOTO: ANI

Cracks appearing in DMK-led alliance, says EPS

SALEM, 12 OCT

AIADMK General Secretary Edappadi K Palaniswami on Sunday said that cracks have started to appear in the alliance led by the ruling DMK in Tamil Nadu. The Congress, an ally of the DMK, has started to ask for more seats to contest the assembly polls in 2026, he said. He flayed the DMK and its partners, stating it has no right to talk about the AIADMK alliance. "In our alliance, the parties are able to talk independently. Whereas that is not the case with the DMK. Today, media reports have stated that the Congress has already started to ask for more seats for the forthcoming polls. Cracks appear in the DMK alliance," Palaniswami said. *—PTI*

INDIA seat deal, manifesto likely this week

Lalu, Tejashwi fly to Delhi; Congress likely to contest between 50 and 70 seats in Bihar

NEW DELHI, 12 OCT

The opposition 'Mahagath bandhan' alliance in Bihar is likely to finalise its seat-sharing in the next few days and may announce its candidates along with a joint manifesto this week.

Talks between the RJD and Congress are underway, and their leadership may meet on Monday as RJD's Lalu Prasad and Tejashwi Yadav are in New Delhi.

"The Congress president has been speaking to all the coalition partners in Bihar, and the final discussion is on for deciding candidates in a few seats," Congress general secretary Jairam Ramesh said..

On the delay in seat-sharing announcement, Ramesh said, "We have to adjust some new partners in the 'Mahagathbandhan' and we have to adjust them too in seat-sharing."

The Congress will get more than 50 but less than 70 seats in the Bihar polls, sources said.

The 'Mahagathbandhan' has a good chance to win as the desire for change is there in Bihar, with the charge-sheet released by the Congress evoking a very good response, said Ramesh.

He said the bureaucracy is running the Bihar government currently. Though NDA is banking upon the direct benefit transfer scheme, people understood the ground realities.

The Congress is working on announcing a few schemes to counter the NDA's narrative and sops.

Besides the 'vote chori' campaign, the Congress is focusing on extremely backward classes. It announced the Maibehen Maan Yojna under which Rs 2,500 will be transferred into the bank accounts of underprivileged women.

Meanwhile, RJD recently "authorised" President Lalu Prasad to take a call on seat distribution and candidate selection.

Speculations were rife that Prasad's family had gone to Delhi to seek the intervention of Rahul Gandhi, which is said to have annoyed the bigger state ally with its aggression. *—PTI*

RJD Chief Lalu Prasad and former Bihar deputy chief minister Tejashwi Prasad will discuss seat sharing with Congress leaders *PHOTO: ANI*

> **In Bihar, there is no hitch in seat sharing in the Mahagathbandhan, as hoped by the BJP. Every party has the right to express its views. We will fight the election together**
>
> -Pawan Khera, Congress leader

JD(U) likely to drops 4 sitting MLAs

PATNA, 12 OCT

Bihar Chief Minister Nitish Kumar's Janata Dal (United) has finalised candidates for the 103 assembly seats it plans to contest in the upcoming elections, with four sitting MLAs to be replaced for poor performance, a senior party leader said. New candidates will also contest Parbatta and Rupauli constituencies after defections to opposition parties.The BJP is set to contest 102 seats, while Chirag Paswan's Lok Janshakti Party (Ram Vilas) seeks more than 20–22 seats. Other NDA allies, Hindustani Awam Morcha and Rashtriya Lok Morcha, will also receive a share of seats. *—PTI*

TEJASHWI'S 'GOVT JOB FOR ALL' PROMISE SPARKS DEBATE

PATNA, 12 OCT

RJD leader Tejashwi Yadav's pledge to provide "a government job for every household" in Bihar has sparked widespread debate, eliciting both hope and scepticism among voters. The promise, aimed at addressing the state's persistent unemployment and high levels of out-migration, includes plans to announce the scheme within 20 days of forming a government, with jobs expected to be implemented within 20 months.

While some residents expressed cautious optimism, many questioned the feasibility of delivering government jobs to nearly three crore households. Rehan Khan, a resident of Phulwari Sharif, dismissed the pledge as an "unrealistic poll gimmick," arguing that the NDA has prioritised overall development over populist promises. Tile shop worker Md Sheru voiced doubts about the practicality of the scheme but acknowledged limited political options beyond the RJD. Cement shop owner Ashok Kumar Rai remained hopeful for modest improvements in employment, whereas paan shop owner Rajesh Kumar openly mocked the scale of the pledge, asking how such a massive number of jobs could be created.

Even within the RJD's core support base, scepticism persisted. Amrish Kumar Puri, a self-described die-hard fan, admitted he doubted the pledge's practicality. Official statistics highlight the immense challenge: Bihar has around 2.97 crore families, but only 26.5 lakh government positions exist.

Analysts say that while the promise directly addresses unemployment concerns, its implementation would require unprecedented administrative capacity, financial resources, and careful planning. *—PTI*

Kishor booked for poll code violation

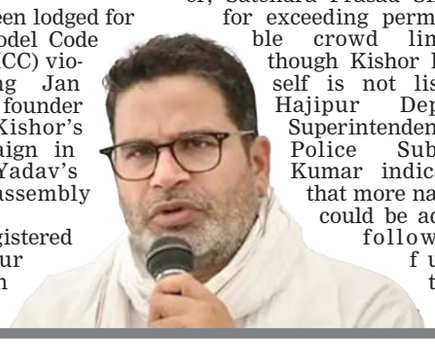
HAJIPUR/PATNA, 12 OCT

An FIR has been lodged for an alleged Model Code of Conduct (MCC) violation during Jan Suraaj Party founder Prashant Kishor's recent campaign in Tejashwi Yadav's Raghopur assembly constituency.

The FIR, registered at Raghopur Police Station in Vaishali district, names the organiser, Satendra Prasad Singh, for exceeding permissible crowd limits, though Kishor himself is not listed. Hajipur Deputy Superintendent of Police Subodh Kumar indicated that more names could be added following further investigation by the Hajipur Sub-Divisional Officer.

When questioned about the FIR, Kishor, 47, was dismissive, stating, "So many FIRs are pending against me. Let there be one more," adding that he would halt campaigning only if officially barred.

Kishor's party has announced candidates for 51 assembly seats, and speculation continues that he may contest Raghopur against Tejashwi Yadav in the upcoming polls. *—PTI*



'Pawan Singh's wife will contest polls'

BALLIA, 12 OCT

Jyoti Singh, wife of Bhojpuri actor and BJP leader Pawan Singh, will contest the upcoming Bihar Assembly elections, her father Rambabu Singh confirmed.

Her constituency and party are yet to be decided, though there is strong support for her to contest the Karakat seat in Rohtas district. "The people of Karakat connected with Jyoti during Pawan Singh's 2024 Lok Sabha campaign," he said.

The 243-member Bihar Assembly goes to polls in two phases on 6 and 11 November, with counting on 14 November.

The announcement comes amid a marital dispute between Pawan and Jyoti, with Rambabu accusing Pawan Singh of "cruelty" and refusing reconciliation. The actor reportedly Rambabu that the matter with his wife would be aettled in court.

Jyoti recently met Jan Suraj Party strategist Prashant Kishor, fuelling speculation about her political alignment. *—PTI*

BJP attacks Cong over Operation Blue Star

NEW DELHI, 12 OCT

The BJP hit out at the Congress after former Union home minister **P Chidambaram**'s remarks on 'Operation Blue Star' and said history must record the truth that it was not a national necessity but a "political misadventure" by Indira Gandhi.

The BJP asked if the Congress will act against Chidambaram for this.

This came after Chidambaram had said that Operation Blue Star, which was launched in June 1984 to clear the Golden Temple of armed terrorists led by Jarnail Singh Bhindranwale, was "wrong" and the then prime minister Indira Gandhi was assassinated for the mistake.

She was assassinated on 31 October, 1984, at her residence by her two Sikh bodyguards.

Union minister Kiren Rijiu said on X, "Chidambaram Ji admits the Congress blunders too late!"

BJP national spokesperson RP Singh slammed Congress and said that Operation Blue Star was not a national necessity, but a political misadventure. He alleged that Gandhi had sought to ignite nationalist fervour before the 1984 parliamentary elections by portraying the "most patriotic community of India, the Sikhs, as anti-national".

Over 3,000 Sikhs were brutally massacred in Delhi and more than 30,000 killed across Punjab, victims of a calculated political design that tore apart the social fabric of the nation," Singh added.

Congress leadership is "very upset" with Chidambaram for his remarks. *—PTI*

PHOTO: ANI

Gopi offers to step down from Cabinet

KANNUR, 12 OCT

Union Minister Suresh Gopi on Sunday expressed his desire to step down from his ministerial post and recommended BJP's newly elected Rajya Sabha member C Sadanandan Master as his replacement in the central cabinet.

Addressing party workers at a function here, Gopi said the senior leader's nomination to the Rajya Sabha marked a significant breakthrough in the politics of northern Kannur district.

"I am saying here with sincerity that Sadanandan Master should be made a (union) minister after removing me. I believe that it will become a new chapter in the political history of Kerala," the union minister of state for petroleum and tourism said.

PHOTO: PTI

The actor-turned-politician said he was among the youngest BJP members in the state, having joined the party only in October 2016.

"I never wanted to be a minister by quitting my film career," Gopi said, adding that his income has significantly decreased in recent times.

Sadanandan Master, a BJP leader from Kannur district, is a survivor of political violence. He lost both his legs during an alleged attack by CPI(M) workers in 1994. *—PTI*

Yogi is infiltrator, must be sent back to U'khand, says Akhilesh

LUCKNOW, 12 OCT

Samajwadi Party leader **Akhilesh Yadav** has accused Uttar Pradesh Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath of being an "infiltrator" from Uttarakhand, calling for his return to state.

Speaking at Lohia Park during a tribute to Ram Manohar Lohia, Yadav stated, "People who are giving the statistics of exodus... We also have infiltrators in UP. The chief minister is from Uttarakhand. We want him to be sent to Uttarakhand."

He further criticised the ruling Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) for its alleged misleading statistics and claimed that the government's record on law and order is abysmal, particularly concerning atrocities against Dalits.

He said, "The police are busy filing false cases against political opponents....maximum harassment and serious incidents are taking place in UP."

He concluded by promising to advocate for the issues raised by Lohia to ensure dignity for all. Deputy Chief Minister Brajesh Pathak is expected to respond to Yadav's allegations shortly. *—PTI*

MP CM transfers Rs 1,541 cr under 'Ladli Behna'

SHEOPUR, 12 OCT

Madhya Pradesh Chief Minister Mohan Yadav on Sunday transferred Rs 1,541 crore into the accounts of over 1.26 crore women under the Ladli Behna Yojana.

Speaking at an event in Sheopur, Yadav said the Bhai Dooj and Diwali festivals would bring more good news for women.

"From now onwards, beneficiaries will receive Rs 1,500 per month," he announced.

At present, eligible women get Rs 1,250 per month under the Ladli Behna.

The chief minister transferred Rs 1,541 crore in the bank accounts of 1,26,86,000 women beneficiaries as the 29th installment under the scheme at the click of a mouse, officials said.

The inter-state Parvati-Kalisindh-Chambal river linking project would greatly benefit farmers in the Sheopur region, and it will surpass Punjab and Haryana in agricultural production in future, said Yadav.

He urged farmers not to sell their land under any circumstances.

"In the coming years, this land will become many times more valuable. A new era of prosperity is about to begin for farmers," the chief minister said.

He also inaugurated and laid the foundation stones for several development projects worth over Rs 532 crore at the grand event. *—PTI*

TRAVELLING OUT OF OPTION

Distant jobs keep Bihar migrants from voting in Assembly polls

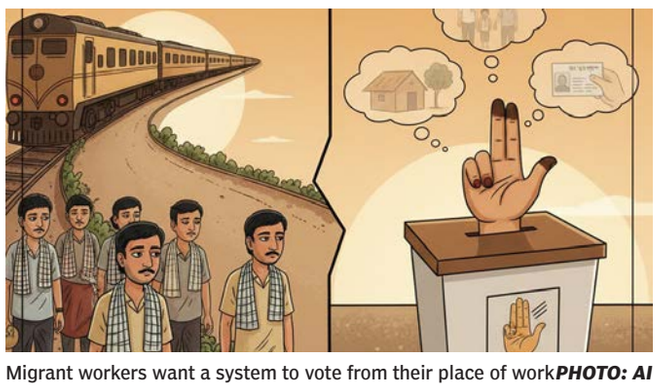
CHENNAI, 12 OCT

For thousands of migrant workers from Bihar living across Tamil Nadu, the idea of travelling over 2,000 km home to cast their vote in the two-phase elections this November remains a distant dream, as their insecure jobs barely allow them to take a day off.

"Most of us in the construction sector stay at the site, cook and eat there. We rarely go out. We work on holidays and sometimes past sunset to earn a little extra for our families," said Ajay Kumar, a construction worker.

"In case I decide to go to Patna, I would need six days for the round trip and a few more to spend with my family," he added.

Many families from Bihar are now spread the state and work in sectors such as rubber glove manufacturing, coir production, domestic work, and other industries.



Migrant workers want a system to vote from their place of work *PHOTO: AI*

"They've even admitted their children to local schools, and a few have registered themselves in the electoral rolls here. So, they are unlikely to vote in Bihar," said Siluvai Vasthian of HEAL Movement, an NGO.

Due to interventions by such organisations and the local administration, children of Bihari migrant families have been weaned away from labour and enrolled in schools.

Migrant workers from Bihar constitute the second-largest group of inter-state migrant labourers in Tamil Nadu after those from Odisha, with nearly 2.51 lakh officially registered in the state. The ISM population includes workers from Odisha, Jharkhand, West Bengal and Assam. *—PTI*

Raj meets Uddhav for second time in a week

MUMBAI, 12 OCT

In a notable reunion, Maharashtra Navnirman Sena (MNS) president Raj Thackeray visited his cousin, Shiv Sena (UBT) chief Uddhav Thackeray, at his Mumbai residence 'Matoshri' for the second time this week.

When questioned by reporters about the purpose of the visit, Raj simply stated, "My mother is with me," suggesting it was a family gathering. His wife, Sharmila, was also present.

This meeting comes amid increasing speculation regarding a potential alliance ahead of the crucial Brihanmumbai Municipal Corporation elections. It marks the sixth known meeting between the Thackeray cousins since July 5, when they celebrated a victory rally following the Maharashtra government's withdrawal of two contentious government resolutions concerning language policies in schools.

Raj had previously visited 'Matoshri' after attending a function at Shiv Sena (UBT) leader Sanjay Raut's family.

Both the leaders are likely to meet again on 14 October. *—PTI*

> When questioned by reporters about the purpose of the visit, Raj simply stated, "My mother is with me," suggesting it was a family gathering. His wife was also present.

Man's body wrapped in plastic found in East Delhi

NEW DELHI, 12 OCT

A decomposed body sealed in a plastic bag and tightly wrapped in brown tape was discovered near the Hindon canal in East Delhi's Ghazipur area on Saturday evening. Police were alerted after locals spotted a suspicious object by the canal. Officers found the bag containing human remains, believed to be several days old. The body has been sent to a mortuary for identification and a post-mortem examination to determine the cause of death. Initial investigations suggest the victim may have been murdered elsewhere and dumped at the site. The area was cordoned off as forensic experts gathered evidence. Police have filed a case and are reviewing CCTV footage. *—PTI*

PHOTO: FREEPIK

Rs 2.82 cr worth of gold biscuits seized by BSF in WB

KOLKATA, 12 OCT

Border Security Force (BSF) personnel seized 20 kg of smuggled gold and arrested a suspected smuggler near the India-Bangladesh border in West Bengal's Nadia district on Saturday morning. Acting on a tip-off, BSF's 32nd battalion at Horandipur Border Outpost spotted a man moving suspiciously behind a bamboo grove around 6 am. He was quickly detained, and a search revealed a plastic packet containing gold biscuits worth about Rs 2.82 crore. The suspect, believed to be transporting gold smuggled from Bangladesh, was taken in for questioning. The seized gold and the accused were handed over to local authorities for further legal action. The operation disrupted a major cross-border smuggling attempt. *—PTI*

ED seizes Rs 45 L in WB civic body jobs scam

KOLKATA, 12 OCT

The Enforcement Directorate (ED) seized Rs 45 lakh in unexplained cash, along with digital devices and documents, during raids linked to alleged recruitment irregularities at South Dum Dum Municipality in West Bengal. The Kolkata zonal office searched 13 locations on Friday, including the residence and offices of West Bengal Fire Minister Sujit Bose. Officials also seized property-related documents. Bose has accused the ED of political targeting ahead of assembly elections, claiming such raids are intended to pressure opposition leaders. He maintained that the public will ultimately vouch for his integrity. The investigation into the scam remains ongoing, with the ED gathering evidence from multiple locations and officials *—PTI*

IED found in Meghalaya, defused safely

SHILLONG, 12 OCT

An improvised explosive device (IED) was discovered and safely defused at Umsning market in Meghalaya's Ri-Bhoi district on Saturday evening, police confirmed. The device was found in an abandoned bag near Meghalaya Rural Bank, prompting an immediate response from authorities. A bomb detection and disposal squad (BDDS) and a K-9 unit were deployed to examine and neutralise the explosives. Officials revealed the IED contained 4.7 kg of gelatine, 10 detonators, and roughly 50 iron rods intended as splinters. The device was safely defused without any damage or casualties. Police have registered a case and are actively investigating the incident. One suspect was identified, and the police are trying to apprehend the guilty. *—PTI*

3 arrested, 1 detained for gangrape of WB medico

Odisha CM urges Mamta Banerjee to punish the guilty

KOLKATA, 12 OCT

Three persons were arrested on Sunday for their alleged involvement in the 'gang rape' of a student of a private medical college in West Bengal's Paschim Bardhaman district.

Police also detained another person. The identities of the three arrested accused were yet to be disclosed. Their mobile phones were also seized.

On Sunday, police cordoned off the crime spot in a jungle adjacent to the Paranaganj Kali Bari cremation ground.

Search operations were conducted in the villages in and around the private medical college in Durgapur, where the survivor, hailing from Odisha's Jaleswar was allegedly gangraped by some men.

The incident took place outside the medical college campus on 10 October when the second-year student had gone out with one of her friends for dinner.

The woman's parents lodged an FIR with the police.

The health condition of the survivor was stated to be "improving" as she is undergoing treatment at the medical college.

Meanwhile, her father pointed out her friend's involvement in the incident and requested the state administration to punish the culprits.

Citizens protest demanding justice and strict punishment to the accused in gangrape of medical student in West Bengal *PHOTO: PTI*

Representatives of the West Bengal Commission of Women, West Bengal Doctors' Forum and Abhaya Manch also visited the survivor and her parents.

The incident has triggered political mudslinging between the ruling Trinamool Congress and opposition parties.

Meanwhile, Odisha Chief Minister Mohan Charan Majhi also urge his West Bengal counterpart, Mamata Banerjee, to take swift action against the perpetrators. He also spoke to the father over the phone and assured him of all support from the state government.

Majhi said that a senior Odisha official is in touch with the West Bengal government and is providing all necessary legal assistance.

He has directed the superintendent of police of Balasore to assist the Durgapur police in the case. *—PTI*

Tribal woman 'raped' in T'gana dies

HYDERABAD, 12 OCT

A tribal woman, who was allegedly gangraped and found lying unconscious with a head injury in Telangana's Medak, has died. The victim, a daily-wage labourer had left her home for labour work on 10 October. Some residents alerted the police after noticing her lying unconcious under a tree in Kulcharam mandal the next day. The mother of five, was taken to a local hospital and then referred to a Hyderabad hospital. A case has been registered. *—PTI*

'DILUTION OF CHARGES'

Charges added in cop's suicide after wife objects to FIR

CHANDIGARH, 12 OCT

- Kumar's wife and senior IAS officer Amneet P Kumar wrote to police earlier that the "diluted sections of the SC/ST Act in the FIR should be amended."

Police have added charges to the FIR registered in the alleged suicide case of Haryana IPS officer Y Puran Kumar following a plea by his wife to add the "relevant provisions" of the SC/ST Act.

Kumar's wife and senior IAS officer Amneet P Kumar wrote to police earlier that the "diluted sections of the SC/ST Act in the FIR should be amended."

Chandigarh IG Pushpendra Kumar, who is heading a six-member special investigation team in the case, confirmed that Section 3 (2) (v) of the Act was invoked.

Kumar's family has yet to give consent for the autopsy until their demands are met.

The Haryana government had shunted out Rohtak superintendent of police Narendra Bijarniya, one of the cops against who Amneet had named along with Haryana DGP Shatrujeet Kapur and others.

The SC/ST section refers to a case when a person who is not a member of a Scheduled Caste or a Scheduled Tribe intentionally insults or intimidates with the intent to humiliate a member of a SC/ST in any place within public view.

Haryana ministers Krishan Lal Panwar and Krishan Kumar Bedi met Kumar's family to persuade them to agree to an autopsy and cremation of the deceased officer.

Chief Minister Nayab Singh Saini assured that the guilty will face action and asked the Opposition not to politicise the matter.

A 31-member committee-- Shaheed Y Puran Singh Nyaya Sangharsh Morcha-- formed to ensure that the family's demands are addressed by authorities, held a "mahapanchayat" in Chandigarh. *—PTI*

PHOTO: ANI

Centre to set-up nuclear reactor in Andhra's Vizag

MUMBAI, 12 OCT

The Department of Atomic Energy (DAE) is set to establish India's first exclusive nuclear reactor in Visakhapatnam.

A senior official from the Bhabha Atomic Research Centre (BARC) confirmed that the facility is expected to bolster India's self-reliance in radioisotopes and reduce treatment costs. "DAE has decided to set up a nuclear reactor exclusively for producing isotopes for medical purposes," he stated.

The reactor, designed under a Public-Private Partnership (PPP) model, is projected to be operational within four to five years and will meet domestic needs while supporting exports.

Currently, India relies on imported isotopes, with BARC supplying around 200,000 units annually for diagnostic procedures. This initiative aims to position India as a key player in the global nuclear medicine sector, reducing reliance on imports from Europe and Asia. *—PTI*

DREAMLINER SCARE

DGCA directs AI to reinspect RAT emergency system

MUMBAI, 12 OCT

Aviation safety regulator Directorate General of Civil Aviation (DGCA) has directed Air India to reinspect the RAT (emergency power source) for stowage on all aircraft whose power conditioning module was replaced by the Tata Group-owned airline in recent times.

The aviation safety regulator has sought a "comprehensive report" from the US aircraft maker Boeing on the preventive measures to be implemented with respect to the un-commanded Ram Air Turbine (RAT) deployment incident.

The development comes in the wake of two back-to-back incidents involving AI 787 aircraft recently and the Federation of Indian Pilots urging the Civil Aviation Ministry to ground the entire B787 aircraft fleet, besides a special audit of the airline as the aircraft experienced failures across critical systems. RAT deploys automatically in the eventuality of a dual engine failure or total electric or hydraulic failure. It uses wind speed to generate emergency power.

PCM is a crucial electrical component that converts, regulates and distributes electric power from the aircraft's power generation system to various onboard systems and equipment.

AI had denied "any assertion that there was an electrical failure" in the Boeing 787 aircraft that was diverted to Dubai. DGCA has also advised to "review the work package of 'D' check for the actions required. *—PTI*

Sabarimala gold plating sponsor lacks stable income: TDB

KOCHI, 12 OCT

The Travancore Devaswom Board (TDB) Vigilance's final report regarding gold losses from the Sabarimala Sreekovil has raised serious concerns over Bengaluru businessman Unnikrishnan Potty, who sponsored gold-cladding projects. The inquiry revealed that Potty lacks permanent income sources; his income tax returns for 2017-2025 showed "no permanent income." Notably, in 2025-26, Rs 10.85 lakh was credited to his account from Kamakshi Enterprises under "Other Social or Community Service."

PHOTO: ANI

The Vigilance recommended a thorough investigation into the works attributed to Potty, revealing that the gold-plating of the Sreekovil door was financed by Ballari's Govardanan, while a Bengaluru businessman, Ajikumar, funded the door frame. The report also highlighted lapses among nine TDB officials regarding the handing over of gold-clad plates in 2019.

A Special Investigation Team (SIT), established by the Kerala High Court, has begun investigating, with Potty named as the primary suspect alongside several TDB officials linked to alleged mismanagement of gold. *—PTI*

Zubeen Garg's close associate Arun appears before CID

GUWAHATI, 12 OCT

PHOTO: INSTAGRAM

Arun, a close associate of singer-composer Zubeen Garg, appeared before the CID's Special Investigating Team (SIT) probing Garg's death in Singapore last month. Details of his visit to the CID office remain undisclosed.

Arun, who considered Garg family and lit his funeral pyre, demanded justice for the late icon, stating, "We want justice for Dada (elder brother). There has been so much delay." He clarified his focus was mainly on Garg's wife, Garima, saying, "I work mainly with 'Bou'."

Regarding other associates' alleged irregularities, Arun remarked, "I don't know of all those things." On the absence of Assam-origin residents in Singapore, he urged, "Those who are in Singapore should be brought here... I don't understand why they are not coming."

The CID, investigating Garg's death while swimming in Singapore on 19 September has made seven arrests, including festival organiser Shyamkanu Mahanta and Garg's cousin Sandipan. *—PTI*

1,300-yr-old temple in TN to be consecrated after 17 yrs on 8 Dec

CHENNAI, 12 OCT

PHOTO: WIKIPEDIA

The 1,300-year-old Arulmigu Ekambaranathar Temple in Kanchipuram will be consecrated on 8 December after 17 years.

Managed by the Tamil Nadu Hindu Religious and Charitable Endowments Department, the ancient temple has undergone extensive renovation costing Rs 28 crore.

Minister PK Sekar Babu announced the date on Sunday. "We had nearly 34 renovation works to complete. Since the temple is over a thousand years old, there are specific guidelines for restoration. All works will be completed by 8 December," said Muthulakshmi P, the department's executive officer.

Dedicated to Lord Shiva, the temple, built over centuries with contributions from dynasties like Pallavas, Cholas, and Vijayanagara rulers, is known for its grand architecture and towering gopuram, among India's tallest. *—PTI*

SC quizzes Centre on life support in ambulances

NEW DELHI, 12 OCT

The Supreme Court has sought responses from the Centre and others on a plea demanding a national framework to ensure ambulances are equipped with adequate life-support facilities. A Bench of Chief Justice BR Gavai and Justice K Vinod Chandran issued notices, returnable in four weeks.

The petition, filed by Saiansha Panangipalli and Priya Sarkar, daughter and wife of former AIIMS director Dr P Venugopal, follows his death en route to hospital due to lack of oxygen and emergency care. Citing government and NITI Aayog reports showing that nearly 90 per cent of ambulances lack basic equipment, the plea highlights gaps in regulation and monitoring.

It urges the authorities to implement enforceable standards, establish an independent review committee, and create a public helpline. *—PTI*

Indian tourists to get visa-free entry in Phillipines

AHMEDABAD, 12 OCT

The Philippines aims to establish itself as a premier tourist destination for Indian travellers, introducing initiatives such as visa-free entry and direct flights.

Air India recently launched direct flights from Delhi to Manila starting 1 October, marking a vital improvement in connectivity after a decade.

Philippines Ambassador to India, Josel F Ignacio, stated, "Together with our visa-free regime for Indian tourists and the resumption of direct flights, we are ready to welcome you. This ease of travel means that you do not lose a day."

Indian Ambassador to the Philippines, Harsh Kumar, announced ongoing discussions with other airlines for additional direct flights. The Philippines Tourism Board reported that approximately 66,000 Indian tourists visited from January to September 2025, following 79,000 visits in 2024.

Tourism Secretary Christina Garcia Frasco emphasised the offerings, stating, "There is a huge potential to increase the footfall of Indian tourists." *—PTI*

FORTNIGHTLY SERVICE

Andaman to start cruise to India's active volcano

Tourist will soon be able to take a round-voyage cruise from Port Blair to India's only active volcano at Barren Island - *PTI*

PORT BLAIR, 12 OCT

The Andaman and Nicobar administration will soon launch a round-voyage cruise from Port Blair to India's only active volcano at Barren Island, offering tourists a rare chance to witness the natural wonder up close.

The uninhabited Barren Island, spanning 8.34 sq km, lies at the junction of the Indian and Burmese tectonic plates.

The nearest inhabited areas are Swaraj Dweep (Havelock Island) and Narcondam Lookout Post. The volcano first erupted in 1787, with subsequent mild eruptions recorded in 1991, 2005, 2017, 2022, and twice this year — on 13 and 20 January.

According to Chanchal Yadav, Commissioner of Shipping and Managing Director of the Andaman and Nicobar Islands Integrated Development Corporation (ANIIDCO), the inaugural voyage will depart on October 24 from Haddo Wharf, Port Blair, followed by fortnightly sailings every Friday at 9 pm.

The cruise will reach the vicinity of Barren Island by Saturday morning and return the same day.

The vessel will offer four accommodation categories — Coral Suite (2-berth), Reef Suite (4-berth), Island Breeze (6-berth) and Lagoon Dormitory (16/24-berth) — priced at Rs 8,310, Rs 6,340, Rs 4,290, and Rs 3,180 per person respectively. Meals will cost an additional Rs 2,000 per passenger.

Bookings are now open, and officials expect strong demand from both domestic and international travellers.

Tickets can be booked online via the Directorate of Shipping Services e-ticketing portal given below: https://dss.andamannicobar.gov.in/eticketing. *—PTI*

25 YEARS OF LOVE, CARE

This screenshot from a viral video shows Chhattisgarh resident Devla Bai Patel, a woman in her 90s, wailing with her head on a chopped peepul tree she had planted 25 years ago. The tree was illegally cut down by two people. The tree stood on government land along a road on the outskirts of Sarragondi village in Khairagarh-Chhuikhadan-Gandai district. Villagers later performed a ritual for the tree and sought forgiveness, after which Patel planted a peepul sapling

PHOTO: SCREENGRAB

Harsh reality shatters Bihar migrants' hope to vote

Bipesh Kumar Yadav fills a motorcycle's tank at a petrol pump in Alappuzha, but his mind is over a thousand miles away, fixed on the upcoming election in his home state of Bihar.

A staunch supporter of RJD leader Tejashwi Yadav, politics is a constant thread in his life as a migrant worker.

Yet, this year, his support will not be marked by a vote.

Like countless others from Bihar working in Kerala, the journey home to cast his ballot is a trip he simply cannot afford to make.

"I joined work here only a month ago. Asking for leave now would not be appropriate. But four of my colleagues are going home next week to celebrate Diwali and Chhath Pooja and to vote," he said.

Asked about the main issues in the election, Yadav, who hails from Araria district , said employment remains the biggest concern.

"Young people in Bihar have to migrate to other states for jobs. There are not enough opportunities in our state. I have already worked in two other states before coming here," he said.

Migrant workers from Bihar are fewer in Kerala than in states such as Punjab, Delhi, Maharashtra, and Karnataka.

Unlike workers from West Bengal, Assam, and Odisha, migrants from Bihar in Kerala are mostly employed in heavy and medium industries, said Benoy Peter, co-founder and executive director of the Centre for Migration and Inclusive Development (CMID).

CMID carries out studies on internal migration and works to improve the quality of life of migrant workers.

Peter said that migrants from Bihar usually return home during Chhath Pooja every year.

"Though their numbers are relatively low in Kerala, a majority of them are skilled workers engaged in construction, and heavy and medium industries. Many Muslim workers from Bihar are employed in footwear and apparel manufacturing units in north Kerala," he said.

Migrants from Bihar usually return home during Chhath Pooja every year, so sheduling the election close to Chhath Pooja helps to ensure that voters working in other states can return home to vote ***PHOTO: PTI***

He added that this time, a larger number of migrant workers from Bihar are expected to travel home to cast their votes.

"Scheduling the election close to Chhath Pooja helps ensure that voters working in other states can return home to vote. There are also concerns about the SIR, especially among Muslim voters from Bihar. Even though they do not celebrate Chhath Pooja, many will still return to ensure they can vote," Peter said.

He noted that construction and industrial units in Kerala usually face labour shortages during Chhath Pooja. "This time, the shortage could be more severe, as more workers are likely to return home for the festival and the polls," he added.

Surprisingly, several migrant workers demand anonymity to share their opinions, fearing consequences.

A worker from Aurangabad district, who lives in Aluva with his family, said he would be returning home next week to vote. Requesting anonymity, he said he supports the BJP. He wants the BJP to rule the state single-handedly and have the party's Chief Minister.

"I am a strong follower of Prime Minister Narendra Modi. Bihar has suffered from corruption under JD(U) and RJD rule. It will end only when the BJP gains full power. I hope that happens this time," he said.

Train reservations from Kerala to Bihar are currently on the waiting list until mid-November, as per the Railway online booking platforms.

Another worker from Bihar, who is from the muslim community and employed in Aluva, said he too plans to vote, but his ticket is still on the waiting list.

"There will be a heavy rush as most workers are returning for Chhath Pooja and the elections. I hope the railways will run special trains. Otherwise, I may have to travel for two days in the general coach without a seat," he said. *—PTI*

SALAR سالار

No data, no aid: Injured sewer workers are forgotten

On a cold February morning in 2020, Sanjay, a sanitation worker, in his forties, from Delhi's Seemapuri, was called in a hurry by a local contractor. A political rally was scheduled nearby, and "the sewer was overflowing".

He was promised Rs 300. "It was urgent and the money was good, so we went," Sanjay said.

Three men climbed down that day, but only one made it out alive.

Inside the narrow pit, thick with the stench of toxic gases, Sanjay's co-workers fell unconscious within minutes. "Then they pushed me to go inside and check," Sanjay said.

He remembers nothing after that but only waking up, 13 days later, in a hospital bed with tubes running through his nose and throat.

Sanjay's medical records from the Lok Nayak Hospital mention "acute sewer gas poisoning" and "pneumonitis" – lung inflammation caused by inhaling toxic gases such as hydrogen sulfide and methane.

He suffered seizures, needed mechanical ventilation, and narrowly survived. And the scars of that day remain etched in his body and mind.

"My stomach hurts all the time, my breathing is heavy, my heart races," he said, pointing to a small plastic bag of pills he can no longer afford.

"I drink alcohol now to fight the pain. It's cheaper than medicine."

Sanjay's mother, now 70, spends her days stitching elastic onto garment tags, earning Rs 30 a day. Their small, single-room house is crumbling; walls are cracked and damp, and the ceiling sagging dangerously.

Despite nearly losing his life inside a sewer, Sanjay never received compensation. There was no inquiry, no official acknowledgment, no rehabilitation.

And, Sanjay's story is not an exception -- it is a pattern.

This year on 28 March, the Supreme Court directed every metropolitan city to pay Rs 30 lakh compensation to the kin of those who die due to manual scavenging within four weeks.

But when it comes to injuries, the law turns vague, advocate Areeb Uddin Ahmed, who has worked on multiple sanitation workers' cases, said.

There is no fixed compensation formula for people like Sanjay, neither are any official data maintained.

Each case is treated "on a case-to-case basis", often meaning no action at all, especially for sanitation workers like Sanjay, who can barely afford two meals a day, let alone pursue a lawsuit.

"While deaths are counted and duly compensated, the injured are forgotten. Many workers who survive toxic exposure live with chronic lung damage, kidney failure or neurological problems, but they are invisible to the state," said activist Ashok Kumar Taank, joint secretary of the Dalit Adivasi Shakti Adhikar Manch, an organisation working for sanitation workers' rights.

Soni is another victim who slipped through these legal cracks.

Her husband, Sher Singh, survived five years after inhaling toxic sewer gases, suffering from lung scarring, kidney damage, hepatitis and tuberculosis before meeting a painful end.

When he died in 2024, she couldn't even afford to pay for his funeral.

All of Soni's four children dropped out of school after Singh's accident. They now help their mother in segregating waste, one as young as 10 years old.

Yet, there are workers like 50-year-old Rakesh Kumar, who keeps cleaning sewers even though his lungs and kidneys are badly damaged.

He says contractors now hesitate to hire him, fearing he could succumb to his injuries while at work. Years of exposure to sewer gases has left him thin and frail, his frame little more than bone and skin.

Rakesh started cleaning sewers when he was 10.

For his community, Valmikis, sewer work passes from generation to generation.

The 2013 Manual Scavenging Act prohibits hazardous cleaning of sewers or septic tanks without safety gear, and mandates protective equipment, gas testing, and rescue readiness.

Yet, implementation remains weak, and informal contracting blurs accountability.

Advocate Ahmed said in case of disability due to such work, the compensation depends on severity with a minimum of Rs 10 lakh for partial disability, and Rs 20 lakh if the disability is permanent or results in economic helplessness.

But for internal or long-term injuries such as kidney or lung impairment caused by exposure during sanitation work, the Supreme Court order does not define any specific clause for compensation, he said.

Occupational health expert Dr Ashish Mittal said that survivors of sewer gas poisoning often suffer long-term damage that is "invisible to the eye".

Mittal explained that post-exposure symptoms such as fatigue, chest tightness, and breathlessness can persist for years.

Many sanitation workers do not retire, they succumb to their injuries before turning 60, he said.

In a bid to eliminate manual cleaning, the government introduced the NAMASTE (National Action for Mechanised Sanitation Ecosystem) scheme by mechanising sewer and septic tank cleaning and providing rehabilitation, insurance, and capital subsidies to sanitation workers.

As of March 2025, 66,961 workers have been validated and 45,000 PPE kits distributed across 400 cities. But Taank said these numbers mask the reality on the ground.

Back in Seemapuri, with no PPE kits available, Ramesh has devised his own way to gauge whether a drain is dangerous.

"If the cockroaches crawl out, it's safe, meaning the gas isn't deadly yet. But if they're dead, that's when you don't go in," he said. *—PTI*

Sanjay was injured while cleaning a sewer in 2020 and has since been battling with lung and kidney related diseases and relies mostly on debt for his treatment ***PHOTO: PTI***

LETTERS write to us at salarenglishdigital@gmail.com

As judge faces impeachment, century-old punishment tale resurfaces

Lawmakers in the country are pursuing the impeachment of a high court judge after bundles of **charred currency notes (in pic)** were discovered on the premises of his official residence.

The extraordinary move, admitted by Lok Sabha Speaker Om Birla, finds a historical parallel from 190 years ago, when a king in the princely state of Travancore took similarly severe action against a corrupt judge.

PHOTO: PTI

At the heart of the current controversy is Justice Yashwant Varma, a senior judge at the Allahabad High Court ***PHOTO: PTI***

At the heart of the current controversy is Justice Yashwant Varma, a senior judge at the Allahabad High Court ***PHOTO: PTI***

PHOTO: FREEPIK

- Swathi Thirunal, the visionary king of the erstwhile princely state of Travancore (south Kerala), ordered to keep a judge in house custody and arrest him later after he was found to be corrupt and passed a judgement "against truth and justice" in a murder case in the year 1835.

At the heart of the current controversy is Justice Yashwant Varma, a senior judge at the Allahabad High Court.

The trouble began on a single day in March, when a startling discovery was made on the premises of his official residence--bundles of currency notes, partially destroyed by fire.

Historical records suggest that a king had taken similar stringent actions against a corrupt judge in the princely state of Travancore 190 years ago.

Swathi Thirunal, the visionary king of the erstwhile princely state of Travancore (south Kerala), ordered to keep a judge in house custody and arrest him later after he was found to be corrupt and passed a judgement "against truth and justice" in a murder case in the year 1835.

The royal proclamation, pronounced by the then diwan (prime minister) Subba Rao on behalf of the king in this regard, is now part of the "Selected Government Edicts" published in 2005 by the Kerala State Archives Department, Government of Kerala.

As per the historical edict, the king urged the people of his princely state to apprehend and hand over to the officials Kunchu Pandalai, a first judge of the appeal court.

It said that the judge had gone absconding after passing the wrong judgement in the murder case.

"Calling on the public to apprehend and hand over to the officers of the Government Kunchu Pandalai Ag First Judge of the Appeal Court, who was absconding after passing judgement in a murder case against truth and justice," the nearly two century-old edict said.

As per the detailed royal proclamation, Pandalai was a judge in a court in Alappuzha, a part of the then Travancore.

As he passed a biased judgement in the case, he was directed to be tried and kept in house custody by the royal administration, it said.

Judge Pandalai had gone absconding in the wake of the developments, and so the Diwan, on behalf of the King, issued the edict urging people to pass on any information if they had about him.

"If anybody came to know about him travelling or hiding anywhere, he should be caught and handed over to the tahasildar, parvatyakar (village officer) or ranakkar (policemen) immediately," the edict said. However, no historical records could be found about whether the absconding corrupt judge was nabbed or what punishment was awarded to him.

Eminent historian TP Sankarankutty Nair said Travancore royals were very particular in the strict maintenance of rules and regulations and had taken up stringent measures against corrupt practices.

"Whoever had committed wrong, stringent actions had been initiated against them. There had been no difference in their stand whether the misdeeds were done by any royal official or a judge," he told PTI.

Nair also cited the example of the transfer of a judge following complaints of biased judgement in Travancore when John Munro was serving as the British resident and Diwan of the princely state during early 1800s.

Allegations cropped up against a judge in Nagercoil (then part of Travancore and now in Tamil Nadu) that he was showing favouritism to the culprits belonging to a particular religion.

"There were records that the Diwan immediately transferred the judge following the allegations. But no records show whether any punishment was awarded to him," the historian said.

There were also historical documents which indicated that the royal administration gave strict directions to judges, barring them from mingling with the public to ensure unbiased judgements. *—PTI*

PHOTO: X

16 dead in Tennessee factory blast

MCEWEN, 12 OCT

A powerful explosion at an explosives plant in rural Tennessee on Friday killed 16 people and left no survivors, officials confirmed. The blast levelled the Accurate Energetic Systems factory, which produces munitions for the US military, and was reportedly felt for miles. Investigators are still determining the cause while combing the smouldering wreckage. Sheriff Chris Davis described the devastation as "a wreck of twisted metal" and confirmed all sixteen missing people were dead. Rapid DNA testing teams have been deployed to identify the victims. Emergency crews continue working cautiously amid volatile explosive materials, as the close-knit community mourns one of its deadliest industrial tragedies. *—PTI*

PHOTO: X

China coast guard rams into Philippines ship

MANILA, 12 OCT

A Chinese coast guard vessel rammed and blasted a powerful water cannon at the Philippine government ship BRP Datu Pagbuaya near Thitu Island (Pag-asa) in the disputed South China Sea on Sunday. The fisheries vessel suffered minor structural damage, though its Filipino crew escaped injury. Manila denounced the incident as "dangerous and provocative", insisting it would not yield "a square inch of our territory". China, which claims almost the entire sea despite a 2016 international ruling invalidating its assertions, has yet to respond. Thitu, home to Filipino residents and troops, is the largest Philippine-held feature in the Spratly Islands and a persistent flashpoint in rising regional tensions. *—PTI*

Afghanistan kills 58 Pak soldiers in overnight border ops

This was after Pakistan bombed Kabul; Islamabad says its 23 soldiers were killed

ISLAMABAD/PESHAWAR, 12 OCT

Afghan refugees sit next to their belongings loaded onto vehicles as they wait for opening of the border crossing point a camp in Chaman, Pakistan *PHOTO: PTI*

Pakistan has seized 19 Afghan military posts and what it described as "terrorist hideouts" along the border, in retaliation for alleged unprovoked attacks by Afghan forces. Meanwhile, Kabul claims 58 Pakistani soldiers were killed and around 30 injured in the cross-border operations.

The Taliban-led Afghan Defence Ministry confirmed its forces mounted "retaliatory and successful operations." It warned that if the opposing side again violated Afghanistan's territorial integrity, its military would respond forcefully. Afghan strikes reportedly targeted Pakistani posts at Angoor Adda, Bajaur, Kurram, Dir, Chitral, and Baramcha in Balochistan.

Zabihullah Mujahid, the Taliban government's chief spokesman, claimed 20 Pakistani outposts were destroyed and that numerous weapons and equipment were seized. He added that nine Afghan soldiers were killed, and 16 wounded. The operations were called off at midnight, following mediation from Qatar and Saudi Arabia.

Pakistan's Interior Minister Mohsin Naqvi labelled the Afghan assault "unprovoked," accusing Afghan forces of firing on civilians and declaring that Pakistan would respond "stones for bricks" to aggression. Pakistani media claimed that artillery, tanks, drones, and air resources were used to capture the posts, inflicting "heavy losses" on Afghan positions and militant hideouts.

The clashes have escalated tensions between Islamabad and Kabul, already strained by repeated cross-border attacks by Tehreek-e-Taliban Pakistan (TTP), allegedly operating from Afghan territory. A recent bombing in Orakzai district killed 11 military personnel, including a lieutenant colonel and a major, and has been linked to TTP involvement.

State broadcaster PTV and security sources released images and footage purportedly showing Afghan soldiers surrendering in Kurram and posts aflame across the border. Pakistan asserted it struck Taliban tanks and key command posts used to launch attacks, including in Kurram and Baramcha./ Pakistani Army said that at least 23 Pakistani soldiers and over 200 Taliban terrorists were killed.

Islamabad on lockdown amid TLP protest fears

ISLAMABAD, 12 OCT

Islamabad and Rawalpindi remained partially locked down for the second day on Saturday amid fears of a protest march by the hardline Tehreek-i-Labbaik Pakistan (TLP).

Authorities deployed over 1,200 paramilitary personnel across Punjab to block the TLP's "Gaza March" from reaching the capital. The march, led by TLP chief Saad Rizvi, began in Lahore on Friday, drawing thousands chanting religious slogans and carrying sticks, rods, and bricks. Clashes broke out with police in Lahore the same night.

Islamabad Police said multiple cases were registered for rallies held in violation of restrictions. Around 90 protesters were arrested from Tarnol and 54 from Kati Pahari. In Tarnol, about 300 people gathered near the railway crossing; police used force and seized sound systems after they refused to disperse. At Kati Pahari, 120 protesters armed with batons and slingshots were detained en route to Faizabad.

Islamabad was sealed off with 500 shipping containers, disrupting essential supplies. Traders reported milk and poultry shortages, and a spike in vegetable prices due to supply chain disruptions.

Some blockades were lifted Saturday night to ease public inconvenience. *—ANI*

China warns US against 100% tariffs

BEIJING, 12 OCT

PHOTO: FREEPIK

China on Sunday defended its fresh export control measures on rare earth materials, lithium batteries, and related technologies, warning of "resolute measures" if US President Donald Trump proceeds with his threat to impose 100 per cent tariffs on Chinese goods starting 1 November.

The export curbs, effective immediately, restrict overseas transfers of rare earth mining and processing technologies. China cited concerns that its materials were being used by foreign entities for military purposes. The country accounts for 70 per cent of global rare earth mining and nearly 90 per cent of processing, essential for electronics, EVs, defence equipment, and clean energy.

In response, Trump hinted at curbing exports of critical software to China, escalating trade tensions just weeks ahead of the APEC summit in South Korea, where he is set to meet President Xi Jinping.

China's Commerce Ministry criticised the US for "abusing" national security claims and overusing export restrictions, particularly in the semiconductor sector. "We do not want a trade war, but we are not afraid of it," the ministry said, urging Washington to respect previous consensus and resolve disputes through dialogue.

China stressed that the curbs are not a ban, and licenses would be issued for legitimate applications, including humanitarian exports.

The move follows a wave of US restrictions over the past 20 days, damaging trust built during recent trade talks in Madrid, China said.

Commentator Alfredo Montufar-Helu noted China's rare public explanation of the move was strategic: "If they don't control the narrative, it will hurt their geopolitical image." With talks at a critical point, both sides are under pressure to de-escalate. A failure to resolve the standoff could trigger a trade scenario similar to the post-"Liberation Day" tariff standoff, potentially destabilising the global economy. *—PTI*

STARVED AND BATTERED

Ceasefire brings hope in Gaza as aid ramps up

Displaced Palestinians carry their belongings as they walk along a heavily damaged Al-Jalaa Street in Gaza *PHOTO: PTI*

CAIRO, 12 OCT

Aid preparations intensified on Sunday following a ceasefire in Gaza that many hope will mark the end of a devastating two-year war. Israel's COGAT said aid flows are expected to reach 600 trucks daily. Egypt confirmed 400 trucks with food, fuel, tents, and medicine had entered Gaza via Rafah and were being inspected at Kerem Shalom by Israeli troops.

The UN said only 20% of needed aid had reached Gaza in recent months due to fighting and restrictions, fuelling famine in some areas. Over 1,70,000 metric tonnes of aid is ready for entry pending Israeli clearance.

The future of the Gaza Humanitarian Foundation (GHF), a US- and Israeli-backed body that replaced the UN's aid role, is uncertain. GHF distribution sites in Rafah, Khan Younis, and Nuseirat have been dismantled, and no aid has been delivered in recent days. The foundation has been criticised for chaotic operations and civilian casualties.

Preparations are underway for the release of 48 Israeli hostages, expected to begin Monday, alongside Palestinian prisoners. Officials say about 20 hostages are believed to be alive. Deceased hostages will be identified at the Institute of Forensic Medicine.

Meanwhile, displaced Gazans have begun returning to destroyed homes in Gaza City and beyond. Satellite images show vehicles moving north on Al Rashid Street. Armed Hamas-run police are patrolling areas vacated by Israeli forces to escort aid. Israel's Defence Minister said plans are underway to dismantle Hamas's tunnel network post-hostage release, under US-led international oversight. *—PTI*

Trump, Sisi to lead Gaza Peace Summit

CAIRO, 12 OCT

US President Donald Trump and Egyptian President Abdel Fatah al-Sisi will co-chair a Gaza peace summit in Sharm el-Sheikh on Monday, joined by over 20 world leaders, including UN chief António Guterres, Britain's Keir Starmer, Italy's Giorgia Meloni, Spain's Pedro Sánchez, and France's Emmanuel Macron. Israel and Hamas will skip the event. Hamas official Osama Hamdan told AFP the group will release Israeli hostages on Monday morning under a signed agreement.

Trump, who pushed to clinch the ceasefire deal, is expected to arrive in Israel Monday morning. *—Agencies*

Trump appoints Scavino as personnel office head

WASHINGTON, 12 OCT

US President Donald Trump has appointed Deputy Chief of Staff Dan Scavino to lead the White House Presidential Personnel Office, the president announced on Sunday.

Scavino succeeds Sergio Gor, who was confirmed by the Senate as the next US Ambassador to India and is currently on a six-day visit to the country.

Trump made the announcement in a Truth Social post, saying, "I am pleased to announce that the great Dan Scavino, in addition to remaining Deputy Chief of Staff of the Trump Administration, will head the White House Presidential Personnel Office, replacing Sergio Gor, who did a wonderful job in that position, and will now become the Ambassador to India."

Trump described the role as "a very big and important position," noting Scavino will oversee the selection and appointment of almost all government positions. "Congratulations Dan, you will do a fantastic job!!!" he added.

According to the White House website, the Presidential Personnel Office manages the recruitment and appointment of candidates for presidential appointments across departments and agencies throughout the Executive Branch. *—PTI*

PHOTO: X

Trump orders Pentagon to pay troops despite shutdown

President Donald Trump on Saturday directed the Pentagon to use "all available funds" to ensure US troops are paid on 15 October, despite the ongoing government shutdown. About 1.3 million service members faced missed pay due to the shutdown, now in its 11th day.

Trump said funds had been identified, and Defence Secretary Pete Hegseth would act accordingly.

The White House noted $8 billion in unused Pentagon funds would be tapped.

The directive excludes hundreds of thousands of furloughed federal workers, who typically receive back pay.

Political deadlock over healthcare and spending continues. *—PTI*

Madagascar under coup as soldiers join stir

YAOUNDE, 12 OCT

An attempted coup is underway in Madagascar, President Andry Rajoelina announced on Sunday, following growing unrest that has gripped the island nation for over three weeks. The crisis intensified on Saturday when members of the elite CAPSAT military unit were seen joining youth-led protests against the government.

The demonstrations, led by a group called "Gen Z Madagascar," erupted on 25 September over alleged government corruption, nepotism, and service failures. The United Nations reports 22 deaths and dozens injured, though the government disputes these figures.

In a statement, Rajoelina's office said an "attempt to seize power illegally and by force" had been "initiated," calling it an act of "extreme gravity." The President urged national unity to defend constitutional order and sovereignty, but did not name those allegedly behind the coup attempt.

Rajoelina first rose to power as a transitional leader following Madagascar's 2009 coup. He was elected president in 2018 and secured a second term in 2023. This is the most significant unrest Madagascar has faced in years. *—PTI*

Oppn leader wins Seychelles Presidential runoff

VICTORIA, 12 OCT

Opposition leader Patrick Herminie wins 52.7 percent of the vote, in the presidential run-off election *PHOTO: ANI*

- The runoff followed an inconclusive first round two weeks ago, when Herminie received 48.8 per cent and Ramkalawan 46.4 per cent.

Opposition leader Patrick Herminie won the presidential runoff in Seychelles, defeating incumbent Wavel Ramkalawan, according to official results released early Sunday. Herminie secured 52.7 per cent of the vote, while Ramkalawan received 47.3 per cent.

The runoff followed an inconclusive first round two weeks ago, when Herminie received 48.8 per cent and Ramkalawan 46.4 per cent. A candidate must secure over 50 per cent to be declared winner. Early voting began Thursday, but most Seychellois cast ballots on Saturday.

Herminie represents the United Seychelles party, which ruled the nation for four decades until losing power in 2020. Ramkalawan, of the governing Linyon Demokratik Seselwa party, sought a second term. Both ran vigorous campaigns addressing key voter concerns, including environmental damage and a heroin addiction crisis in a country long seen as a tourist haven. The election came amid growing opposition to the governing party.

Last month, activists filed a lawsuit challenging a government decision to lease 100 acres on Assomption Island to a Qatari company for a luxury hotel, including reconstruction of an airstrip. Critics say the deal favours foreign interests over Seychelles' welfare. *—PTI*

5 DECADES OF BRILLIANCE

Oscar-winning icon Diane Keaton no more

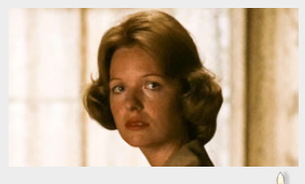
LOS ANGELES, 12 OCT

Diane Keaton, the Oscar-winning actor renowned for her roles in 'Annie Hall', 'The Godfather' trilogy and 'Father of the Bride', has died aged 79. According to People Magazine, she breathed her lasy in California.

Tributes poured in, with co-star Bette Midler calling her "hilarious, a complete original... what you saw was who she was."

Born Diane Hall in 1946 in Los Angeles, Keaton took her mother's maiden name after discovering another Diane Hall was already registered with Actors' Equity. She began her career on stage, earning a Tony nomination for 'Play It Again, Sam'. She also understudied in 'Hair'.

Keaton's breakout role came in 1972 as Kay Adams in 'The Godfather'. She reprised the role in its sequels, despite initial hesitation. In 1977, her turn as the idiosyncratic title character in Woody Allen's 'Annie Hall' won her an Academy Award and cemented her as a cultural icon.



5 JAN, 1946 - 11 OCT, 2025

She collaborated frequently with Allen in films including 'Sleeper', 'Love and Death', 'Manhattan' and 'Interiors'.

She was nominated for three further Oscars: for 'Reds' (1981), 'Marvin's Room' (1996), and 'Something's Gotta Give' (2003). The latter, a romantic comedy directed by Nancy Meyers, became a late-career favourite. She also starred in 'Baby Boom', 'The First Wives Club', and the 'Book Club' series.

Keaton never married but adopted two children, Dexter and Duke, in her 50s. Her romantic relationships included Woody Allen, Al Pacino, and Warren Beatty.

She also directed, with credits including 'Hanging Up' and an episode of 'Twin Peaks'. Beyond acting, Keaton was a writer and fashion icon, known for popularising the "coastal grandmother" aesthetic. She published memoirs 'Then Again' and 'Let's Just Say It Wasn't Pretty', and the design book 'The House That Pinterest Built'.

Honoured with the AFI Life Achievement Award in 2017 and a handprint ceremony at the TCL Chinese Theatre in 2022, Keaton once said, "I'm just lucky to have been here... in any way, shape or form." *—PTI*

NSE faces 170M cyberattacks daily; 'cyber warriors' defend system

MUMBAI, 12 OCT

The National Stock Exchange (NSE) faces around 170 million cyberattacks daily, requiring a dedicated team of "cyber warriors" to work around the clock to ensure uninterrupted operations.

The NSE recorded its highest-ever 40 crore (400 million) cyberattacks in a single day during 'Operation Sindoor', designed as a DDoS simulation.

However, attackers failed to cause any damage due to the coordinated efforts of men, machines, and advanced technology.

"Every day, millions of cyberattacks take place on the NSE. But our technical teams, their systems and technology combat these attacks round the clock using specialised software," a senior NSE official told PTI.

He said that the number of cyberattacks ranges from 150 million to 170 million daily, making the task for the teams and systems highly challenging.

Technical teams at the twin cyber defence centres remain in constant battle mode, equipped with upgraded software to neutralise and repel large-scale attacks on the financial market infrastructure 24/7, year-round.

The NSE recorded its highest-ever 40 crore cyberattacks in a single day during 'Operation Sindoor', designed as a DDoS simulation **PHOTO: PTI**

"The strong cybersecurity architecture involving tech-savvy personnel, machines and technology makes the NSE's operations safe", the official said.

NSE has implemented strong internal cybersecurity measures for its operations and also runs a Cybersecurity Fundamentals Training Program through the NSE Academy.

Trading members are required to undergo regular cybersecurity and cyber-resilience audits, with results submitted to the exchange, according to officials.

The security set-up includes strict protocols governing emails, external data, pen drives, and protection against Distributed Denial of Service (DDoS) attacks.

Pop-ups and alerts are instantly generated upon detection of any suspicious activity through these channels, they added.

NSE has a durable, self-activated backup system that can be operated remotely from its Chennai base through a formal digital procedure and mandatory approvals. *—PTI*

PHOTO: TATA

Tata, Maruti report boost in market share in Sept

NEW DELHI, 12 OCT

Tata Motors and Maruti Suzuki reported significant growth in their retail sales market shares for September, according to the latest passenger vehicle registration data. Tata' market share climbed to 13.75 per cent, up from 11.52 per cent last year, selling 32,586 units. Maruti sold 123,242 units, achieving a market share of 41.17 per cent, a slight increase from 40.83 per cent in September 2024. Overall, passenger vehicle retail sales reached 299,369 units, up 6 per cent from 282,945 units last year. In contrast, Hyundai and Toyota experienced declines in their market shares, with Hyundai at 11.96 per cent and Toyota at 6.78 per cent. Meanwhile, the two-wheeler sector saw Hero MotoCorp and TVS Motor Company increase their shares, while Honda faced decline. *—PTI*

US-China tariff, inflation, Q2 earnings may drive mkt

Investors will keenly watch IT majors & midcap firms

NEW DELHI, 12 OCT

Stock market investors this week would track the renewed tariff tensions between the US and China, domestic inflation data, besides, quarterly earnings from blue-chips HCL Tech, Infosys and Reliance Industries would also drive the momentum in equities, analysts said.

Moreover, global market trends and geopolitical developments would also drive investors' sentiments.

"Markets direction this week will hinge on a mix of domestic cues, global macroeconomic trends, and corporate earnings. The renewed escalation of the US–China tariff war, which sparked a sharp sell-off on Wall-Street on Friday, is expected to dampen global risk sentiment. This resurgence in trade tensions could spur dollar outflows, adding further pressure on emerging market equities and currencies," Ponmudi R, CEO – Enrich Money, an online trading and wealth tech firm, said.

US markets ended sharply lower on Friday. The Nasdaq Composite tanked 3.56 per cent, while S&P 500 tumbled 2.71 per cent and Dow Jones Industrial Average dropped 1.90 per cent.

"This week will be eventheavy as focus shifts to key domestic macroeconomic data and a busy Q2 FY26 earnings calendar. On the data front, the government will release retail inflation (CPI) figures for September on 13 October, followed by wholesale inflation (WPI) on 14 October," Ajit Mishra – SVP, Research, Religare Broking Ltd, said.

Moreover, global market trends and geopolitical developments would also drive investors' sentiments **PHOTO: PTI**

Investors will keenly watch numbers from IT majors and midcap IT names such as Infosys, HCL Technologies, Wipro, Tech Mahindra, LTIMindtree, along with banking heavyweight Axis Bank, as well as Reliance Industries, he said.

Investors would also track trading activity of foreign investors this week, an expert said.

On the macroeconomic front, focus will shift to the United States, where Federal Reserve Chair Jerome Powell is scheduled to speak on 14 October. His comments will be closely watched for cues on the Fed's interest rate outlook and inflation trajectory, Meena said.

Last week, BSE benchmark surged 1,293.65 points or 1.59 per cent, and NSE Nifty climbed 391.1 points or 1.57 per cent. *—PTI*

Mcap of 8 top firms jump by ₹1.94L cr

NEW DELHI, 12 OCT

The combined market valuation of eight of India's top-10 most valuable companies surged by Rs 1,94,148.73 crore last week, reflecting a bullish trend on Dalal Street. The BSE benchmark climbed 1,293.65 points, or 1.59 per cent, signalling strong investor sentiment across key sectors.

Tata Consultancy Services (TCS) emerged as the biggest gainer, adding Rs 45,678 crore to its market capitalisation. Other major gainers included HDFC Bank, Infosys, Reliance Industries, and Bharti Airtel. Bajaj Finance, ICICI Bank, and State Bank of India also recorded notable increases, highlighting broad-based growth among corporate heavyweights.

In contrast, Hindustan Unilever and the Life Insurance Corporation of India experienced declines in their valuations. Reliance Industries retained its position as the nation's most valuable company, followed by HDFC Bank, Bharti Airtel, and TCS in the top four. *—PTI*

A query directed to Flipkart did not elicit a response **PHOTO: PTI**

ED offers Flipkart chance to resolve FEMA violations

NEW DELHI, 12 OCT

The Enforcement Directorate (ED) has reportedly offered e-commerce giant Flipkart the option to resolve a Foreign Exchange Management Act (FEMA) violation case by admitting fault and paying a penalty. This proposal was presented to Flipkart last week under FEMA's compounding rules, as per sources familiar with the matter.

A query directed to Flipkart did not elicit a response. The ED has also summoned Amazon India to assess its compliance status. An Amazon spokesperson commented, "We do not comment on ongoing investigations."

According to an official from one of the e-commerce firms, the ED's offer may enhance India's negotiating stance amid ongoing bilateral trade discussions with the US. The compounding rules allow companies to voluntarily acknowledge breaches of FEMA provisions and settle by paying a penalty without enduring protracted enforcement proceedings.

Both Flipkart and Amazon India face scrutiny over alleged breaches of FEMA, particularly regarding discounts offered on their platforms to boost sales. The ED initially issued a show cause notice to Flipkart and related parties in July 2021 concerning potential violations from 2009 to 2015, prior to Walmart acquiring a majority stake in Flipkart in 2018. Subsequent notices have continued into the present, with ongoing investigations by the Competition Commission of India regarding competition law violations. *—PTI*

India exports 7.75L tonnes sugar in 2024-25: AISTA

NEW DELHI, 12 OCT

India exported about 7.75 lakh tonnes of sugar during the 2024–25 marketing season, which ended in September, according to the All India Sugar Trade Association (AISTA). The government had allowed exports of 10 lakh tonnes from 20 January 2025. Between February and September, shipments included 6.13 lakh tonnes of white sugar, 1.04 lakh tonnes of refined sugar, and 33,338 tonnes of raw sugar, with 21,000 tonnes supplied to SEZ refineries as deemed exports. Major destinations were Djibouti, Somalia, Sri Lanka, and Afghanistan. AISTA has urged the government to announce the 2025–26 export quotas by November 2025 and to continue the same allocation policy as in the current season. *—PTI*

Etihad focuses on boosting India's growth

KOLKATA, 12 OCT

Etihad Airways is prioritising premium travel and strategic partnerships to boost revenue in India, one of its top three global markets. Abu Dhabi-based carrier operates 185 weekly flights to 11 Indian cities, fully utilising its 50,000-seat weekly allocation under India-UAE bilateral agreement. With frequencies capped, Etihad is focusing on "smart ways" to attract high-value travellers. The introduction of the new A321 LR aircraft in Kolkata, featuring a wide-body-like premium cabin, reflects this strategy. Through yield optimisation, enhanced customer experience, and operational efficiency, Etihad aims to remain a preferred carrier for Indian passengers while sustaining profitability despite limited seats. *—PTI*

EY and Microsoft launch AI Skills Passport

NEW DELHI, 12 OCT

In a bid to equip India's youth for an AI-driven future, EY and Microsoft have introduced the AI Skills Passport, a free online learning programme for those aged 16 and above. This initiative, already benefiting over 40,000 participants globally, is designed to bridge the significant AI skills gap in India. Monesh Dange, Partner at EY India, stated, "The launch of the AI Skills Passport is a panacea for India's growing demand for skilled AI talent." Bhaskar Basu from Microsoft added, "It reflects our vision of 'AI for all' and our commitment to fostering future-ready talent." The programme, available in English and Hindi, includes 10 hours of modular lessons and offers participants a verifiable digital badge upon completion. *—ANI*

ONGC trails Zomato in mcap despite massive assets

NEW DELHI, 12 OCT

State-owned Oil and Natural Gas Corporation (ONGC), India's largest oil and gas producer, is now valued at around Rs 3.10 lakh crore, trailing food delivery firm Zomato, which has a market capitalisation of Rs 3.36 lakh crore. This is despite ONGC holding significant stakes in subsidiaries and minority investments that account for over a third of its market value.

At the close of trading on Friday, ONGC's market cap stood at Rs 3.097 lakh crore, below Hindustan Aeronautics Ltd (Rs 3.23 lakh crore) and Titan Company (Rs 3.13 lakh crore). ONGC was India's most valuable company in 2012, with a market capitalisation of Rs 2.44 lakh crore, ahead of TCS and Reliance Industries. Over the past 13 years, its valuation has risen by only 26 per cent, while Reliance and TCS saw valuations jump to Rs 18.7 lakh crore and Rs 10.95 lakh crore, respectively.

Analysts note that the market has not fully accounted for ONGC's diverse portfolio, including a 71.63 per cent stake in Mangalore Refinery and Petrochemicals Limited (Rs 18,000 crore), a 54.9 per cent stake in Hindustan Petroleum Corporation Ltd (Rs 52,770 crore), and minority stakes in Indian Oil Corporation (14.2 per cent, Rs 31,000 crore) and GAIL India (5 per cent, Rs 5,900 crore).

Oil Minister Hardeep Singh Puri highlighted that public sector oil companies are undervalued despite profitability, pointing out that the three major oil marketing companies earned Rs 2.5 lakh crore over six years. ONGC posted Rs 1.16 lakh crore in profit in last three years.*—PTI*

Beer industry seeks import relief amid aluminium can shortage

NEW DELHI,12 OCT

The domestic beer industry in India is grappling with a severe shortage of aluminium cans, prompting calls for a temporary relaxation of quality control norms from the government. The Brewers Association of India (BAI) reports an annual deficit of 12-13 crore units of 500 ml cans, which represent nearly 20 per cent of national beer sales. This shortage could result in a revenue loss of approximately Rs 1,300 crore for government.

The government's April 2025 implementation of mandatory Bureau of Indian Standards (BIS) certification for aluminium cans has exacerbated supply issues. Key suppliers like BALL Beverage Packaging India and Can-Pack India have exhausted capacity and cannot ramp up production for 6-12 months. BAI is requesting a deferment of the quality control order to April 2026 to allow local manufacturers time to increase capacity.

BAI Director General Vinod Giri stated, "This transitional arrangement will avoid business disruption while upholding regulatory oversight." The brewing sector's stability is critical, impacting over 27,000 jobs and associated industries. *—PTI*

The brewing sector's stability is critical, impacting over 27,000 jobs and associated industries **PHOTO: PIXABAY**

ICAI to supply financial data for India's AI

CANDOLIM, 12 OCT

The Institute of Chartered Accountants of India (ICAI) is in discussions with the Ministry of Electronics and Information Technology (MeitY) to supply financial and economic data for India's forthcoming sovereign Artificial Intelligence (AI) model. The collaboration aims to ensure that the AI model is trained on authentic and comprehensive datasets relevant to the Indian economy.

The government is developing national Large Language Models (LLMs) to reduce reliance on foreign technology. ICAI, which maintains authenticated balance sheets, audit reports, and other financial records for listed companies, is expected to provide crucial data for building robust and accurate AI systems. The sovereign AI model is scheduled to be ready ahead of the India AI Impact Summit in February, 2026.

In parallel, ICAI has begun integrating AI tools to support its 4,00,000 members in auditing work. These tools can automate repetitive tasks, enable continuous auditing, enhance fraud detection, and perform advanced data analytics. The institute estimates that its initiatives could reduce online and digital financial fraud by approximately 25 per cent. *—PTI*

FARES RISE 1.5-3 TIMES

Diwali rush: Hospitality, travel sectors see strong demand

NEW DELHI, 12 OCT

Hospitality and travel services providers are witnessing robust demand this festive season in the run-up to the long Diwali weekend, registering strong bookings across urban and leisure destinations, with intercity bus services occupancy levels even touching 95-100 per cent.

With the GST reform acting as a key driver for mid-scale hotels and mid-market domestic customers, making it easier for travellers to explore lesser-known destinations, Hotel Association of India (HAI) President KB Kachru said early trends show higher hotel occupancy, reflecting the excitement of travellers celebrating festivals with family, friends, and leisure getaways.

"Booking patterns this season highlight travellers' preference for convenience, flexibility, and curated experiences. Many hotels are reporting growing interest in premium and experiential stays, signalling a shift toward immersive travel that blends leisure, culture, and wellness," he said.

Intercity bus routes are operating near full capacity, with occupancy levels touching 95-100 per cent and fares increasing by 1.5 to 3 times above the norm, indicating strong and predictable demand elasticity during this period, he added.

Similarly, MakeMyTrip Co-founder & Group CEO Rajesh Magow said visiting friends and relatives (VFR) remains the biggest driver of festive season travel, as many Indians head back to their home towns to celebrate Diwali. *—PTI*

With the GST reform emerging as a key driver for mid-scale hotels and mid-market domestic customers, travellers are finding it easier to explore lesser-known destinations **PHOTO: ANI**

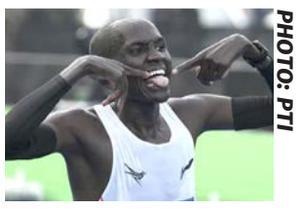


PHOTO: PTI

Kenyans Matata, Rengeruk win Delhi Half Marathon

NEW DELHI, 12 OCT

Kenya's Alex Matata, who clinched the men's title in the Vedanta Delhi Half Marathon on Sunday, said he kept pushing himself throughout the race to bring joy to his brother, who could not travel with him due to illness. Matata, who finished runner-up here last year, ran a perfectly-timed race to cross the line in 59:50:00 seconds and pocket USD 27,000 for his efforts. "The celebration... I do it for myself and my brother. I feel my brother was representing me here. He (brother) was unwell, so I thought 'let me push myself to my level best and see what I can achieve'," the 27-year-old told PTI Videos. He left behind Ethiopia's Boyelign Teshager (1:00:22 seconds) and compatriot James Kipkogei (1:00:25 seconds) to seal victory with a sub-60-minute timing.—*PTI*

No Indian makes skeet finals at ISSF Shotgun C'ship

DUBAI, 12 OCT

None of the Indian shooters could make the individual finals in either the men's or women's skeet events at the ISSF World Championship for Shotgun, here on Sunday. In the women's skeet, Raiza Dhillon was the best-placed Indian, finishing 16th among 58 shooters with a score of 116 out of 125, three points short of the cut-off mark of 119 required to make the six-shooter final. Parinaaz Dhaliwal and Ganemat Sekhon shot identical scores of 110 each to end 44th and 47th, respectively, as India finished eighth in the team standings out of 12 participating nations. In the men's skeet, Bhavtegh shot 119 out of 125 to finish 38th in a strong field of 116 competitors.—*PTI*

Tiger Woods has 7th surgery on his lower back

NEW YORK, 12 OCT

A timeline of Tiger Woods' injuries after announcing Saturday he had a seventh surgery on his lower back.December 1994 As a freshman at Stanford, Woods had surgery to remove two benign tumors and scar tissue. December 2002, Woods had surgery to remove fluid inside and outside his ACL in his left knee, and to remove benign cysts. It is from this surgery that Woods said he learned the ACT was damaged. July 2007 Ruptures his ACL while running on a golf course after the British Open. He went on to win five of his last six tournaments, including the PGA Championship.—*PTI*

PHOTO: PTI

Joshna Chinappa enters Japan Open squash semifinals

YOKOHAMA, 12 OCT

Seasoned Indian squash player Joshna Chinappa defeated Egyptian Nardine Garas in straight games to storm into the semifinals of the Japan Open PSA Challenger event in Yokohama, Japan. The 39-year-old former women's world No. 10 beat Egyptian second seed Garas 11-8, 15-13, 11-9 in the quarterfinals on Saturday. Joshna will now take on the fourth-seeded Egyptian Rana Ismail in the last-four stage. Earlier, the former Asian champion and world doubles champion defeated French fifth seed Lauren Baltayan 11-7,11-4, 11-9 in the second round, and Malaysian Anrie Goh 11-6, 11-6, 11-6 in the opening round. —*PTI*

Mandhana becomes 2nd Indian to reach 5,000 runs

Smriti on Sunday became the first player to score 1,000 runs

NEW DELHI, 12 OCT

Opener Smriti Mandhana reached 5000 runs in One-Day Internationals on Sunday during India's Women's ODI World Cup 2025 match against Australia.

Smriti also became the second Indian to reach this milestone in women's ODIs — former India captain Mithali Raj has 7805 runs to her name and currently is the top-scorer in the format's history.

Indian vice-captain Smriti Mandhana on Sunday became the first player in women's ODIs to score 1,000 runs in a calendar year during India's high-profile Women's World Cup group match against Australia here.

She is the youngest and fastest to the milestone, reaching it in 112 innings and 5,569 balls, surpassing Stafanie Taylor's 129 innings and Suzie Bates' 6,182 balls.

The elegant left-hander, who had endured a quiet start to the tournament, roared back to form in style, smashing 80 off 66 balls (9x4s, 3x6s) and put together 155 runs opening stand with Pratika Rawal.In a high-voltage encounter at the ICC Women's World Cup (CWC) 2025 against India,

India's Smriti Mandhana celebrates her century against Australia PHOTO: PTI

Annabel Sutherland PHOTO: PTI

Australia's **Annabel Sutherland** claimed a fifer.

India's highest total in Women's ODI World Cups

India registered its highest Women's ODI World Cup score during its encounter against Australia in Visakhapatnam on Sunday.

Fifties from Smriti Mandhana and Pratika Rawal, along with contributions from the middle order, helped the side surpass its previous record of 317 for eight against the West Indies in 2022.

Sunday was also only the first instance of a team scoring 300-plus against Australia in the Women's 50-over World Cup.

The genesis of India's batting charge was in the 155-run opening stand between Mandhana and Rawal in just 24.3 overs, also atoning for their previous individual and joint failures against Sri Lanka, Pakistan, and South Africa in the ICC showpiece.

Mandhana welcomed Molineux, smashing 18 runs in her very first over that included a six and two fours. —*PTI*

WOMEN'S ODI WORLD CUP

SA look to keep winning juggernaut against Bangladesh

VISAKHAPATNAM, 12 OCT

South Africa vs Bangladesh
Match starts at
3.00 pm IST

Having roared back into contention with twin wins, a confident South African unit will look to keep the juggernaut rolling when they face a spirited Bangladesh in their Women's ODI World Cup clash here on Monday.

After a crushing 10-wicket loss to England in their opener, the Proteas women found their rhythm with convincing wins over New Zealand and hosts India, reigniting their campaign in style. Currently, they sit fourth on the points table with a -0.888 Net Run Rate.

On paper, South Africa, boasting the likes of captain Laura Wolvaardt, Marizanne Kapp, Tazmin Brits, Sune Luus, and Ayabonga Khaka, looks the stronger side.

After the disastrous 69 all out against England, their top order has been in fine touch, with Brits and Luus firing against New Zealand and Wolvaardt demonstrating her class against India.Crucial contributions from the lower order, particularly Nadine de Klerk and Khaka, proved pivotal in South Africa's win against India earlier this week.

The Proteas will also be hoping veterans Marizanne Kapp and Anneke Bosch step up to provide additional firepower against Bangladesh.

South Africa enters this clash with the advantage of familiarity with the conditions, having already played two matches at the venue.

Bangladesh, on the other hand, began their tournament on a high, producing a morale-boosting seven-wicket win over Pakistan.

However, successive defeats against England and New Zealand have dented their momentum and exposed some persistent vulnerabilities.

Their bowling unit has been the primary positive, led by the promising 20-year-old pacer Marufa Akter, who has claimed five wickets so far, ably supported by the spinners. —*PTI*

Shanghai Masters: Vacherot beats cousin Rinderknech

YOKOHAMA, 12 OCT

World number 204 Valentin Vacherot on Sunday beat his cousin Arthur Rinderknech to win the Shanghai Masters.

Qualifier Vacherot, the lowest-ranked Masters 1000 finalist in history, won 4-6, 6-3, 6-3.

The all-family final between the 54th-ranked Frenchman Rinderknech and 204th-ranked Vacherot, from Monaco, is one of the tournament's unlikeliest endings to date - the latter's coach and half-brother, Benjamin Balleret, described it as a "fairytale."

It was just the third ATP Masters 1000 final in history to feature two unseeded players.

Elder cousin Rinderknech went ahead first, breaking with a backhand in the third game after three unforced errors from Vacherot.

That was enough for the 30-year-old to claim the set in an otherwise well-matched duel. Watched on by Roger Federer, the second set continued in much the same vein, with neither player able to make headway early on.

Rinderknech faced a break point in the eighth game and saved with an ace, but failed to convert a subsequent advantage to hold.

He found himself on the brink again after an unforced error when he hit the ball into the net, and Vacherot did not miss his chance this time to force a decider. —*PTI*

Valentin Vacherot PHOTO: PTI

HOPE & CAMPBELL SCORE 50S AS WI MOUNTS RESISTANCE

NEW DELHI, 12 OCT

John Campbell saved his best for last with a counter-punching unbeaten 87 as the West Indies batters showed rare resilience to live and fight another day after being asked to follow on by India on the third day of the second Test here Saturday.

Riding on a 138-run unbroken stand between Campbell and Shai Hope (66 batting), West Indies reached 173 for two at stumps. These are the only half-centuries that the visitors have managed in this short series, so far.The West Indies still need 97 runs to force India to bat again and avoid defeat by an innings margin. Although India's victory is a certainty, the counter-attack from Campbell and Hope would give them renewed confidence before they tour New Zealand.In the first two sessions, left-arm wrist spinner Kuldeep Yadav (5/82) had set the ball rolling for an early finish with his fifth five-for in Test cricket, with West Indies folding for 248 in their first essay. With 270 runs in arrears and a history of three back-to-back shoddy batting shows, it was expected that Indian bowlers would make short work of the Windies line-up.West Indies went into the tea with a scorecard reading 35 for 2. Still, Campbell altered his strategy by adopting an offensive approach as he took the aerial route against Ravindra Jadeja and Kuldeep.

Hope & Campbell PHOTO: PTI

Kuldeep Yadav PHOTO: PTI

The Feroz Shah Kotla track has remained mostly batting-friendly for the first three days, and West Indies off-spinner Khary Pierre is hopeful it takes time to deteriorate, giving his batters enough opportunity to take the game into day five.

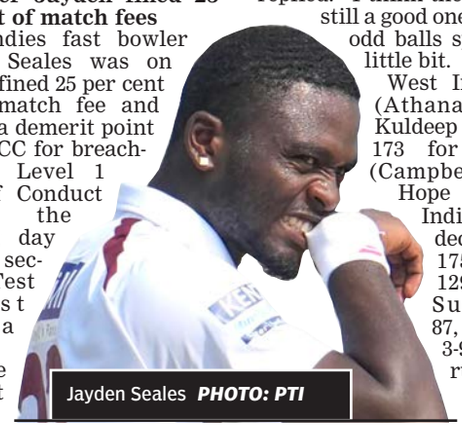
WI pacer Jayden fined 25 per cent of match fees

West Indies fast bowler Jayden Seales was on Sunday fined 25 per cent of his match fee and handed a demerit point by the ICC for breaching its Level 1 Code of Conduct during the opening day of the second Test against India here.

The incident occurred on Friday in the 29th over of India's first innings, when Seales fielded the ball on his follow-through and threw it at batter Yashaswi Jaiswal, hitting him on the pads.

"Seales was found to have breached Article 2.9 of the ICC Code of Conduct for Players and Player Support Personnel, which relates to 'throwing a ball (or any other item of cricket equipment) at or near a player in an inappropriate and/or dangerous manner during an International Match'," an ICC media release stated. Asked when he expects the track to deteriorate further, the left-arm spinner replied: "I think the wicket is still a good one, with the odd balls spinning a little bit.

West Indies 248 (Athanaze 41, Kuldeep 5-82) and 173 for 2 (f/o) (Campbell 87*, Hope 66*) trail India 518 for 5 dec (Jaiswal 175, Gill 129*, Sai Sudharsan 87, Warrican 3-98) by 97 runs —*PTI*



Jayden Seales PHOTO: PTI

LEAVES OUT TWO CLAUSES

AIFF adopts Supreme Court-approved constitution

NEW DELHI, 12 OCT

The All India Football Federation on Sunday adopted its Supreme Court-approved constitution at its Special General Body Meeting, leaving out two contentious clauses "pending directions from the Apex court".

The SC had, on 19 September, approved the draft constitution of the AIFF prepared by former apex court judge L Nageswara Rao with certain modifications, and directed the federation to adopt it within four weeks.But two clauses of the draft constitution, one relating to the requirement of SC nod for amendment and another prohibiting office-bearers from holding dual posts in the AIFF and state units, have caused headaches to the top brass."The Constitution was adopted without the two clauses pending directions from the Supreme Court," a top AIFF official told PTI.The AIFF had approached the court on Thursday, seeking clarification on the two clauses 23.3 and 25.3 (c) of the draft constitution in view of the objections raised by the world governing body FIFA.

An SC bench on Friday had told the AIFF to inform the SGM "that the Supreme Court has agreed to clarify. "The SC also said on Friday that it would have a world with Justice (retd) Rao regarding the two clauses and would ask him to submit a report. —*PTI*

Spain beat Georgia 2-0 to edge closer to World Cup spot

LONDON, 12 OCT

Spain's national team defeated Georgia 2-0 on Saturday night at the Manuel Martínez Valero Stadium in Elche.

The game was part of the European qualifiers for the 2026 World Cup, which will be held in the United States, Canada, and Mexico.

The goals came from Yeremi Pino and Mikel Oyarzabal in the 24th and 64th minutes, respectively.

With this win, Spain tops the group standings with 9 points from three victories, scoring 11 goals while keeping a clean sheet. Georgia, meanwhile, sits third in the group with 3 points, having won one match, lost two, scored 5 goals, and conceded the same number. Erling Haaland Misses Two Penalties, Still Scores Hat-trick as Norway Thrash Israel 5-0 In World Cup Qualifier Erling Haaland scored a hat trick against Israel to pass 50 goals for Norway after twice missing a penalty in a 5-0 World Cup qualifying victory on Saturday. The 25-year-old Haaland extended his leading tally in European qualifying to a remarkable 12 goals in six games, and his overall Norway total to 51 in 46 matches. Haaland reached the 50-goal mark far quicker than the other elite strikers of modern times, according to statisticians Opta.

France star Kylian Mbappé and Poland's Robert Lewandowski took 90 games, while record eight-time Ballon d'Or winner Lionel Messi took 107 for Argentina —*PTI*

1st Test: Pakistan 313/5 vs SA

KARACHI, 12 OCT

Opener Imam ul-Haq fell agonisingly short of a century on his return to the Pakistan team, but his 93 runs helped the side to a commanding 313 for five at the close of the first day of the first Test against South Africa on Sunday.

The 29-year-old, who played his last Test against Australia in late 2023, missed out on a century when he was dismissed two balls from tea, but was the top scorer on a good day for the home side at the Gaddafi Stadium. —*PTI*

WORLD JUNIOR C'SHIPS

Indian shuttlers aim for individual glory

GUWAHAT, 12 OCT

Riding high on their historic bronze medal finish in the mixed team event, the Indian contingent will look to carry that momentum into the individual competitions of the BWF World Junior Championships that begin here on Monday.

India's best performance in the tournament came 17 years ago in Pune when Saina Nehwal grabbed the girls' singles gold while RMV Guru Sai Dutt clinched the bronze medal in boys' singles. So far, India has won a total of 11 individual medals in the history of the competition, including four silver.

India's Vennala Kalagotla and Reshika Uthayasooriyan PHOTO:PTI

India's best chance to add another gold medal to their tally in this edition is the girls' singles with junior world number one Tanvi Sharma and China Open quarterfinalist Unnati Hooda.

Both players have been placed in different halves of the draw, raising hopes of a possible all-Indian final.

Tanvi, the Asian U-19 bronze medallist, has a bye in the opening round, and a potential quarterfinal clash against Indonesian seventh seed Thalita Wiryawan could be her first big test in the campaign.

Meanwhile, Unnati, seeded eighth, is likely to kick off her campaign in the second round against Hong Kong's Liu Hoi Kiu Anna and a potential last eight clash against second seed Anyapat Phichitpreechasak of Thailand.

India's other Asian U-19 bronze medallist Vennala K and world number 41 Rakshita Sree have been placed in the same quarter but would have to come through a few tough matches to stand a chance of reaching the last four stage. —*PTI*

Schauffele edges out Max for win at Baycurrent Classic

YOKOHAMA, 12 OCT

This may not have been Xander Schauffele's most prestigious tournament victory, but it should be the American's most memorable.

Schauffele shot a 7-under 64 on Sunday to win the Baycurrent Classic in Japan, a country where his mother grew up and where he has many connections, including maternal grandparents who reside there.

Schauffele, who shot 19-under 265 at the Yokohama Country Club, finished one shot ahead of American Max Greyserman, who was also the runner-up at this event a year ago, as he chases his first PGA Tour title.

Greyserman closed with a 65 and held or shared the lead through the first three rounds. American Michael Thorbjornsen finished with a 64 and was three strokes behind the winner.

Schauffele has won two major championships, including the British Open in 2024, which was his last victory, and took gold in the Tokyo Olympics, which were delayed until 2021 by the pandemic. —*PTI*